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THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES
AND PREPARATORY SCHOOLS.

The Eighth Annual Meeting of the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools was held in Dwight Hall, Yale University, New Haven, on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 13th and 14th, 1893.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13th, 1893.

The Association was called to order at 2.45 p. m. by the president, Dr. John Tetlow, of Boston, who spoke as follows :

I desire, in behalf, not only of those members of the Association who have come here from a distance, but in behalf of the Association as a whole, to express the pleasure it gives us to meet for the discussion of educational questions in the halls of this venerable university. I desire, also, to express our grateful appreciation of the cordial hospitality with which we have been welcomed here. I have no doubt that this feeling will receive more formal expression at a later stage in our meetings, but so much I desired to say in advance.

The first business in order this afternoon will be the appointment of a nominating committee to report at the business meeting to-morrow morning. Has anyone a suggestion to make as to the method of appointment?

It was voted that the Nominating Committee be appointed by the Chair. This committee, as subsequently named, consisted of President Timothy Dwight, Professor Frances E. Lord, Mr. James A. Tufts, President Wm. F. Warren, and Dr. Charles B. Goff.

THE CHAIR; The question which we have met to discuss this afternoon concerns one of the oldest subjects on the secondary

school curriculum. Much has been said during the last twenty years to the disparagement of classical studies. Much that has been said has been justly said, and needed to be said; but, notwithstanding, Latin is still a subject that strongly attracts the brighter pupils in the secondary schools, those who come from homes in which culture has been a family tradition. The department of study to which it belongs still continues to contribute its proportion of the discoverers of new truth; and no subject connected with secondary instruction calls out more interesting or more fruitful discussions in meetings like this. The exact form which the subject is to take this afternoon is, "What shall we teach in Latin in the Preparatory Schools, and How?" When the gentlemen announced on the programme have spoken, the subject will be thrown open for general discussion. I now have the pleasure of presenting to you Mr. William C. Collar, Head Master of the Roxbury Latin School.

MR. COLLAR : (Abstract.) Before considering the proper subjects to be taught in Latin, and the proper method of teaching them, I have one question to ask. It is simply whether the beginning of Latin ought to precede the beginning of French or whether the beginning of French ought to precede the beginning of Latin. The custom certainly is for Latin to precede French. It is so in the German Gymnasien, in the English schools and universally in our own schools. Even in the colleges French is often deferred one, two, or three years. Yet there are some strong reasons for reversing the order. It is a natural process for us to go from English to Latin through French, because French is a natural bridge from English to Latin. This is true whether we consider the inflections or the vocabularies, or the order in the three languages. Naturally, therefore, French boys learn Latin a great deal more readily and quickly than English speaking boys and girls.

It cannot be denied that the study of Latin makes French easy, that is, the reading of French; but which is the language to be made easy, French or Latin? The former is already ten times as easy as Latin, which is a seriously difficult language, and all the more difficult in this age, because faith in its value and efficacy are dying out. Even graduates of the German Gymnasien cannot, according to Professor Paulsen, read Latin with facility

and pleasure. Let us therefore facilitate the approach to Latin by all means, and, among others, by the earlier study of French.

The Presidents of the associated colleges in New England have united in a recommendation that Latin be begun in the grammar schools. Three cities near Boston are putting Latin into the grammar schools. I believe this to be an error, which, if followed widely, will fasten the present order upon us for decades. I agree that Latin ought to be begun earlier, and that it may be. I would push down the High-School course one or two years, but I would have French begun even earlier.

"What shall we teach in Latin in the preparatory schools?" I answer, "We shall teach what the colleges require of us." But I plead for some change. Why should our boys always read Cicero's Orations, and not his Essays or Letters? And, especially, why should not some other author be substituted for Caesar? The Gallic War is a military history and nothing more,—monotonous, wanting in literary charm, and after a time dreadfully wearisome. I cannot see much that is noble in Caesar's character and nothing at all in his dealings with Gauls. His cruelty was displayed not only on individuals, but on whole nations. I want to see Caesar dethroned; yet not wholly cast aside and disused.

I would have the colleges offer more variety in their requirements, designating, as now in English, certain books to be read for five years, and then changing the requirement in part. This simple and reasonable change would result in better teaching and fresher enthusiasm for the classics among the teachers.

"How shall we teach?" It is next to impossible to describe an oral method, but I may point out what I conceive to be a great error in the rudimentary teaching of Latin and an important error in the more advanced study.

There is a prevalent feeling that in the first year the learner should handle but a few words, not more than five or seven hundred, and that these should be worked over and over till they are thoroughly implanted in his memory. No mistake could be greater. Ignorance of the vocabulary constitutes three-fourths of the difficulty in reading a foreign language. Therefore the learner should be introduced the first year to two thousand words, and should learn at least one meaning for each.

I want now to say a word with regard to what I conceive to be

a grave error in advanced teaching. Professor Hale asserts that in translating, the learner must look at each word in succession, fix his attention only upon one word at a time, and mentally exhaust all the possibilities of the construction of that one word before he proceeds to the next. This seems to me emphatically to illustrate how not to do it, and I think I have demonstrated to my own satisfaction, by trial, that it is the worst way. The success which Professor Hale believes to have resulted from that method, I attribute mainly to personal influence, and not at all to the method.

THE CHAIR: I am not in a situation to go into details, but within three or four days I have been in correspondence with the superintendent of schools at Brookline, and he tells me that French is begun in the fourth class of the grammar schools, and continued to the end of the course. They seem, therefore, in Brookline to be following the plan recommended by Mr. Collar.

The discussion was then opened by Professor Tracy Peck of Yale University.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am sure that we are all greatly indebted to Mr. Collar for his very interesting and suggestive remarks. His high eminence as a teacher of Latin and as an author of Latin text-books gives quite exceptional importance to his utterances in regard to Latin study. With much that he has said I very heartily agree, while holding in reserve my concurrence on some points. In particular, I am sorry that he entertains so gloomy a view as to the future of Latin scholarship in this country. Of the great and unavoidable difficulties of Latin I know something; but it does not seem to me that those difficulties are insuperable, even for the average pupil, and such direct and indirect rewards await whoever will triumph over those difficulties that we have an ample incentive to keep cheerfully at our work. We certainly are living in a scientific and commercial age, and, on the surface at least, there is a prejudice against classical studies; but I misinterpret altogether the signs and omens if there is discernible an intelligent or permanent reaction against the study of Latin. At any rate, if such study is a desirable element in any wise scheme of liberal education, it becomes the responsible guardians of the study to have faith and hope.

As to Mr. Collar's antecedent remarks on the proper sequence of the study of French and Latin, the subject seems to me altogether too large to be attached to the embarrassingly large subjects that are properly before us. I will merely suggest, therefore, that the ideal arrangement would be that French, or German, or both, be acquired very early in the pupil's life, when the organs of speech much more easily naturalize strange sounds and intonations, when the mechanical verbal memory is very active and strong, and when, by occupation with much easier modern tongues, a linguistic sense may be developed which will be of very great service in the later and more conscious work upon a more foreign and complicated speech. But as this very early contact with a modern language is but seldom realizable, the importance of the time-element should not be lost sight of for the proper acquisition of what is, under the most favorable conditions, so difficult and exacting a study as Latin. Whatever is done with French, Latin should certainly be taken up as soon as possible after the tenth year. Much could be said in favor of beginning the study at an even earlier age.

Coming now to the first of the two subjects for the afternoon ("What shall we teach in Latin?"), I shall speak but little of certain details into which Mr. Collar has largely entered. It would be quite worth while to devote some session of the Association to considering the proper place of Caesar in a school curriculum; but there is a much more serious and fundamental question as to the chief object that we should have in view in all our Latin teaching. Recent answers to this question, which includes "What shall we teach?" have been very different and discordant.

Thus it has been urged in our times with much iteration that the chief object of the study of Latin is its bearing on our knowledge and use of English. The student of Latin certainly comes with immense advantages and aids to the historical, and grammatical, and etymological study of English, as well as to a more intelligent sense of its literature; he comprehends, as he can comprehend from no other source, the exact force of a large percentage of our vocabulary, and the origin and development of many metaphors and idioms; his experience in translating from Latin into English and from English into Latin bears very directly upon his appreciation and command of an expressive and attractive style. But though such results of Latin study are with many

the most valuable results, they should be regarded as incidental. If the study of a foreign language is justified primarily because it aids us in our own speech, Latin immediately has formidable rivals in other cultivated tongues. Other less roundabout, possibly more sure and easy, ways of reaching the same end would need to be carefully considered, and the position of Latin would certainly be a precarious one.

Again, it is said that we study Latin to facilitate our acquisition of modern foreign languages. It is urged, and with perfect truth, that the vocabulary of Latin continues in several modern languages, while in several others the inflected character and intricate structure of Latin have their analogues. But here, too, the teacher of Latin will need great persuasiveness and, I suspect, some sophistry, if he is to convince his pupils or the community that herein his profession has an ample *raison d'être*. Many will doubt the value of the end here suggested; many more, while conceding the desirableness of the end in view, will question the wisdom of thus securing it. The mistake is the common one of regarding as the paramount object of a study that which is, in most cases, only one of many incidental advantages that may wait upon and reward that study.

It is also said with much ingenuity that, as we are living in an era of science, the value of Latin study, as the value of all study, is to be measured with reference to its power in cultivating a scientific quality and habit of mind. It is urged, and with perfect correctness, that while we are working at Latin constructions, grasping the thought of a Roman author through his words, sentences, and periods, and translating from and into Latin, we are having an admirable training in scientific processes—observation, analysis, induction, classification, etc.—and thus are qualifying ourselves, not to know and enjoy Latin in itself, but to do the scientific work that awaits us in every sphere in life. Great emphasis is to-day placed upon the value of work in laboratories and with apparatus; but a handful of Latin books is an ample scientific equipment, is, in fact, an inexpensive and portable laboratory. Now we may justly congratulate ourselves that there is great truth in all this, and the hearty and frequent testimony of scientists to the manifold advantages to them *as scientists* of their Latin training is very encouraging; but if our justification of our labors as Latinists is chiefly that we are preparing our students

for success in scientific work, we may depend upon it that our constituency will ridicule our claims as the claims of champions of a lost cause.

We are all familiar with other grounds on which the study of Latin is often advocated, *e. g.*, as a means of mental discipline and as an element in culture. A system of Latin teaching that should not be accompanied and followed by these results would be lamentably defective. No one can properly grapple with the mechanical structure and the peculiar genius of the Latin language without being trained in logical and intellectual processes of a very high order. No one can make even a slight acquaintance with Rome's characteristic literature without coming into such contact with elevating thoughts and clear and artistic expression as to have a desire to reproduce the best things in his own life and environment. An eminent graduate of this college once said that to have learned the proper functions of the word "therefore," was sufficient compensation for years spent in learning Latin, and many a master of English style has found the best explanation of his art in his severe and manifold drill in the classics. But I feel that our cause is hopelessly imperiled if we regard even these high aims and issues as predominant.

A lower conception, and one quite prevalent, I suspect, in the schools, is that Latin is taught simply because certain colleges prescribe it among their requisites for admission. College is the destination ; a certain modicum of Latin work is one of the ticket-coupons ; if the coupon is duly taken up and punched, all is well, and the coupon is now fit only for the waste-basket. This vulgar notion ought to be vigorously attacked by the teacher. Every pupil should be made to see that even a very limited amount of this study may enter into his life, as a genuine *κτήμα ēs dē*, with permanent value. Each stage in our Latin work is, in a sense, preliminary to what is beyond, but each stage should also be so conducted as to have a certain unity and completeness and abiding worth of its own.

Now, however valuable any or all of these ends of Latin study may be, I am confident that the supreme and comprehensive end, which every teacher should keep steadily before him, is to stimulate and assist pupils in acquiring the power to read Latin literature. This is the teacher's peculiar province, this is his high privilege, this should be his fixed ambition. All else should be regarded as

secondary and incidental, and with this distinct, controlling aim all else is sure to come and to come much more abundantly. Of course it is not meant that at the end of his school days every student must be able with facility to read the more difficult Latin poets, or prose writers ; it is meant that every student should be so far and so wisely started on this path that further progress will be easy, and above all, that with this capacity should be aroused the ambition and the will to go forward. Probably no one has ever gained this power of reading Latin without being profoundly thankful therefor ; certain it is that thousands bitterly regret the lack of this power, sometimes with remorse at their own failure to improve opportunities, and sometimes, alas for us, with feelings of resentment towards teachers who were unfaithful in service or unwise in their methods. In this assembly it would be an impertinence to take time to show that this is a desirable accomplishment, in fact our question implies that Latin is to continue in the schools. If the question were up for debate, the argument would naturally have to do with the quite unique qualities and history of the Latin language, with the distinctive character of a large part of Latin literature and its relation to other literatures, and with the wonderful career and civilization of Rome, of which the language and literature are the image and exponent.

I shall consider the second part of our subject ("How shall we teach Latin ?") very briefly, and I trust, without prejudice. I must, though, confess to sharing the irritation which many faithful teachers have felt at the recent dogmatic and mercenary obtrusion of several methods. The disposition is to be deprecated that flipantly criticises what has heretofore been done in Latin training, and culls from what has always been in every sensible system some one feature, pushing that single feature into unwarrantable prominence and advertising it with a plausible title as a fresh discovery. How many conscientious teachers have been grievously disappointed who have been prevailed upon to adopt, as a modern discovery and as a finality, the so-called "Natural Method," or the so-called "Inductive Method," or the suggestion that much translation from the orginial into the vernacular is fatal to rapid and genuine success ! The favorable circumstances under which we learn our mother-tongue, and, in very exceptional cases, one or two modern languages (though in both processes there is very much more of art than of nature) can hardly be expected in the case

of Latin. It is, for every one of us, foreign and intricate in a far higher sense than is, *e.g.*, French or German : we study it almost of necessity in a very conscious and objective way, and while we are thus learning it our time and energies are divided among several distracting studies and interests. Every language that we work at should be made as living and interesting as possible ; there is much in the "Natural Method" that all through the past has produced excellent results and that every teacher should put into practice, but if the method as it is popularly understood be regarded as a final settlement of ways and means it is a sorry delusion.

Nor is induction as an essential factor in all sound training a late invention ; but the strict application of the "Inductive Method" to an orderly, progressive, sometimes necessarily mechanical acquisition of Latin, is neither wise nor possible. Any method should be regarded simply as one of many essential arts and devices which the teacher must employ, in wise combination and variation. A class of pupils in Latin may safely be intrusted to the teacher who has sterling common-sense, who understands student-nature and has helpful sympathies with the young, who is thoroughly convinced that it is well worth while for himself and for his pupils to learn Latin more and more, who has a keen sense of his great opportunities and responsibilities, and who will never sacrifice a class or any member thereof to any rigid system. Pliny's statement of his eclectic method as a lawyer contains much suggestive wisdom for us all,—"Omnia pertempto, omnia experior, πάντα denique λιθον κινῶ." The Apostle Paul was one of the world's greatest teachers and he has given us the key to his success,—"I am become all things to all men that I may by all means save some."

If we are looking, not for a Procrustean method, but for flexible suggestions, we may find much in Lord Bacon's dictum,—"Reading Maketh a Full Man, Conference a Ready Man, and Writing an Exact Man." 'Fulness,' 'readiness,' 'exactness,' these certainly are the qualities that we would gladly see realized in all our students. 'Fulness' must come from constant and wide reading, even from the beginning. The pupil must of course have a certain foundation-knowledge of forms, idioms, and grammatical lore, but as soon as possible he should be brought into contact with the actual literature. Not only should

he read critically and with close analysis master-pieces of value and interest and beauty, but he should very early be put to reading at sight. Sight reading should be sometimes oral, but more frequently in writing. The minute study of carefully selected portions of the text and the rapid but intelligent survey of large quantities of Latin should throughout the course be carried forward in parallel lines. Thus will not only a reading power be acquired, but the acquiring of that power will contribute toward securing two great ends of every sound educational system,—special and general discipline.

The 'Readiness' that comes from 'Conference' can best be gained by treating Latin as a living, usable language. One can not too emphatically recommend such exercises as reading the Latin aloud ; memorizing, not merely lists of words, but, much more, valuable and stimulating thoughts, embalmed as they are so apt to be in Latin in crystal and majestic phrase of verse or period ; declaiming oratorical passages from prose and poetry ; singing Latin songs and hymns ; occasional acting of Latin dialogues ; learning a colloquial vocabulary and putting it to practice in the class-room and elsewhere. Such work should be made interesting and fascinating, as it can be if the teacher has intelligent enthusiasm, and if the fact be brought out in what is said and read that those awful Romans were, after all, in their homes and on the streets and at their games very much like the rest of us.

'Exactness' must accompany and result from all wholesome work in Latin, and so far as it comes from 'Writing,' composition and translation are of great importance. The writing of Latin should be an integrant part of the school curriculum from start to finish. Apart from other considerations, it is the surest and most interesting way of learning paradigms, syntax, and idioms. And there is no finer test of one's comprehension of the foreign thought than the necessity of reproducing the substance and the shades of the original in clear and idiomatic English. The ideal condition of course is that the Latin alone should at once convey to our minds its full message of thought and expression, but before reaching that millennial state we must insist upon frequent and exact translation.

But whatever skilful combination of methods may seem most fitting at any particular stage of Latin work, the teacher should

actually *teach*,—not simply hear lessons and conduct examinations. The peculiar difficulties of Latin, which are confessedly great and many, can best be appreciated and overcome under wise oral guidance. The personality of the authors read, their relations to their times, and their literary and historical significance should be made clear. Even the youngest pupils can be made to realize something of the part which Rome has played in the world's history, something of the nature and value of the contributions which her language and literature and institutions have made to modern civilization. The student comes back to his tasks from such excursions with new ambition and a more intelligent interest. His Latin study gains in dignity, and acquires a better perspective and horizon. And to permanently enkindle enthusiasm in his students and command their respect for himself and his work, the teacher must certainly be himself a diligent and zealous student, constantly reading more and more in Latin authors, and enriching his knowledge and his teaching of Latin by studies along cognate lines and from different points of view.

THE CHAIR : I am inclined to think that the narrow lines within which the colleges have for the most part heretofore worked are chargeable, in a great degree, to the lamentable deficiency of acquaintance with Latin literature on the part of secondary teachers. The general subject is now open for discussion.

MR. WILLIAM GALLAGHER : I suggest that Mr. Collar specify more particularly what should be read in Latin. It seems to me that the Romans are lamentably deficient in that kind of material ; I have not discovered it, although I have been looking around for just that sort of thing.

MR. WILLIAM C. COLLAR : I don't know what more delightful Latin there is than *Viri Romae*, for boys and girls, for it deals with great men, and great men's ideals of character ; and a boy or girl can get from that as much Roman history as most educated people know, and get it in a very delightful way. And, then, why shouldn't we read parts of *Nepos*? I insist upon the point that I tried to make in my address, that the pupil at that impressionable age ought to be concerned with what will interest him in great characters, that will give him some ideals, if not all-

round ideals, at least ideals in some particulars ; if not complete, at least partial, ideals. It is sometimes said that Nepos is harder than Cæsar ; I don't think that is true. There are parts of Caesar's Gallic War that are easier than Nepos, but there are parts of Caesar's Gallic War, also, that are commonly read,—and one comes upon them very soon in the very first book, that are harder than anything in Nepos. Then, I think it is a great recommendation that you can read a little in Nepos that is complete in itself and then go on to something else, instead of dragging through a long book composed, almost wholly, as I said, of military operations. What a book is Caesar's Gallic War for girls, for instance ! I suppose there are more girls studying Latin than boys. I wonder if their mothers, if they read Latin, think that the Gallic War is exquisitely suited to the reading of girls. I said that I wouldn't discard Caesar ; I think there are parts of Caesar that are very profitable reading. I repeat that I want him dethroned ; I don't want him discarded ; what I object to is the undue exaltation of Caesar ; the keeping of pupils on the Gallic War for a year and sometimes two years. Nor do I think that Caesar's Latin is all that it is sometimes praised as being. It is true that you feel a great difference between the Latin of Caesar and the Latin of Nepos ; but the Latin of Nepos will do very well for boys and girls, and Cæsar is sometimes careless and often obscure. You will find all along traces of the haste with which he wrote. He wrote in haste, and wanted to compress all that he could, often, into a sentence. Hence you will often find a sentence crowded with ablative absolutes, as you will never find in Cicero. But Professor Peck is a great deal better judge than I am of Latin style, and he suggests that after reading outside of Caesar's Gallic War one can come back refreshed to that author. Well, I have read a great deal outside, but I don't see that I have any added desire for the Gallic War. I have availed myself of the opportunity, in preparing boys for college, in Greek more than in Latin, of taking my pupils through quite a wide range, reading one year eight books of Homer's Iliad, or Odyssey, and the next year another eight, and the next year another eight, so as to complete the whole Iliad and Odyssey, in cycles ; and I should be glad to do so to a far greater extent than I have felt at liberty to do in Latin if I thought it would answer ; but I knew it wouldn't answer. I know, so long as my boys on the final examination are to be examined

solely on the orations of Cicero, our reading the last year must be in Cicero's Orations. I say it is a burden, it is a grievance; and I ask you gentlemen of the colleges to relieve us of this. I am delighted to say that in this association I have found such a hospitality to new ideas on the part of the gentlemen of the higher institutions; or perhaps I should say, I have been delighted with the kindness, and courtesy, and openness with which they have received our overtures. Now I believe it is possible to them, if they will consent, to do a great thing for teachers,—enlarge their reading as Professor Peck suggests; and strengthen their scholarship. I believe they will add zest to classical studies, if they will only revise the requirements of admission. Then to sum up my answer to Dr. Gallagher; let us have some variety in place of so much Caesar; let us have something of Viri Romae of Eutropius, let us have some Nepos, in place of so much Caesar. Let us be liberated in some way, some of the time, from this yoke of Caesar.

PRESIDENT L. CLARK SEELEY: In regard to the expediency of studying French before Latin, I doubt whether it can be done successfully, at present, in our Preparatory Schools. It would involve too great a revolution in existing methods to seem practicable; nor does the evidence, that those who have previously studied French have made more rapid progress in Latin, seem conclusive enough to justify so radical a change.

But I do heartily concur with all that has been said in regard to the desirability of providing some substitute for Caesar. Such a substitution seems all the more necessary, if Latin is to be introduced still earlier in the grammar schools. Some years ago, I made a similar suggestion to a Latin teacher, growing out of the practical experience of my own children in their training with Caesar; and asked whether it was not possible to offer something not quite so unspeakably dull, to boys and girls, as Caesar's Commentaries. I received little encouragement then, and am glad, therefore, to have my question more satisfactorily answered by so experienced and successful a Latin teacher as Mr. Collar. It does seem as if something might be done in the line of his suggestions, and selections might be made from Nepos, Ovid and Sallust, which would give our youth additional interest in the study of Latin. Now they often get a distaste for it, because they dislike so much the text-book through which their knowledge of the language is first acquired.

I once met a boy who said he was interested in Caesar's Commentaries, but on inquiry, I found it was because the teacher built bridges and gave object lessons of the Gallic War. Comparatively few teachers are able, by the novelty of their illustrations to overcome the inherent dullness of the subject.

The place assigned to Caesar's work is generally justified on account of its diction. Is this, however, a sufficient reason for its retention? Do boys and girls when they begin to study Latin need, especially, models of the best Latin style? Can not these be more profitably reserved for a later period? Could we not arouse a deeper interest in this study, if we gave our youth something to satisfy their imagination; something to touch their susceptibility at that period of life when they are full of emotion, and ready to respond to an interesting story?

If some of our scholars will do for Latin what my friend here, in his selections from Herodotus, has done for beginners in Greek, I doubt not the colleges will be ready to accept such desirable substitutes, and drop Caesar from their requirements.

MR. DAVID V. COMSTOCK: I think that almost all I could say or would say has been said: but I do sympathize most thoroughly,—although this may be a repetition, with all the hard knocks that our esteemed friend, Caesar, has had. There came to my mind a moment ago this fact, which never suggested itself to me before, that in the first four books of the Gallic War, and the four Orations against Cataline, I can recall only two sentences which have in them anything that savors of a joke or a pun or anything humorous, or anything that would appeal to a boy's sense of fun or wake him up; and each one of these sentences requires the most painstaking elaboration on the part of the teacher to introduce it properly to the comprehension of the boy. One is in the passage where Cicero says that perhaps Cataline and his confrères are waiting for "tabulae novae." "Well," he says, "thanks to me, they shall have 'tabulae novae,' but under the auctioneer's mallet." I never had a boy come into the recitation room the first time and translate that correctly, or with the faintest idea of its meaning; and I say, "You mustn't *translate* that phrase at all,—merely *transfer* it bodily; otherwise you will compel me to go into an elaborate statement of what they meant, and how the Romans wrote, and all that. You must get the spirit of it,—it's a *pun*."

Now, the other instance is in Caesar, in the first book, where you remember Caesar was going to put the members of one of his legions on horseback, instead of making them walk ; and then comes in this keen bit of wit, which never made boys smile yet, in all my experience : "One of the common soldiers said, not without a touch of wit" (and the touch was slight), "that Caesar was doing more for them than he had promised, because he had promised to make them his guard of honor, and he was really making cavalrymen of them." But the boys didn't smile. "Why," said I, "boys, that is a joke !" By dint of review and re-review, at the end of the year every boy in the class had the idea that something was said at some time by somebody not without a slight touch of wit. I am not in a particularly destructive frame of mind, but I can sympathize most heartily with the enemy who are training their artillery upon Caesar's Gallic War, as a whole. I once had to construct a wooden model of Caesar's bridge, and I put it upon the desk and explained it, and then the boys did see it was a marvel of simplicity and strength combined, and they saw how rapidly it could be constructed and taken to pieces ; but I did not feel that the boys' knowledge of Latin, or their Latin style, or their interest in Latin had gained one penny-weight by the tedious process.

In the fifth and sixth books of the Gallic war I find interesting passages, interesting even to boys. Let the first book be kept to the last. Why ? Because it is extremely hard for a beginner, and because it furnishes material for practice in more difficult constructions of the *oratio obliqua* ; but I must confess that I never brought a class to the last part of the first book of Caesar without wishing that Caesar had never written it. I do believe that, if we could have the coöperation of the college authorities, we might make most excellent selections from Caesar which would appeal to a boy's taste and add to his knowledge of Latin at the same time.

Now, permit me to say just a word about Latin prose composition. I think that when I entered college I knew vastly less about the writing of Latin sentences than a boy in an average school under average teaching knows to-day after he has studied Latin six months, certainly, at the end of one year. I believe that Latin prose composition should be taught at the very outset. It need not be made mechanical and perfunctory. I believe that,

as soon as a pupil can put together two or three Latin words, he should be required to write Latin,—not once a week, but every day.

As I have already said, I am not over-destructively inclined ; but I should like to see selections from Nepos, Ovid, Eutropius, and such parts of Caesar as are proper, introduced in place of the regular, narrow-gauge road of Caesar, *as a whole*.

At this point Professor Thomas D. Seymour, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements for the Social Meeting, in behalf of Yale University, invited the members of the Association and their guests to visit during their stay the principal buildings of the University, and also to dine in Alumni Hall at six o'clock. These invitations were freely accepted, and not far from a hundred and fifty enjoyed the hospitality of the University at the dinner.

EVENING SESSION.

The Association reassembled in Dwight Hall and were called to order by the President at 7:45.

THE CHAIR : Doubtless every person in this Association knows that the National Council of Education—an organization within the National Educational Association—a year ago last July appointed a committee on secondary education which, from the number of members composing it, has come to be known as the "Committee of Ten;" that this committee arranged nine conferences, each composed of ten experts in a principal subject in secondary schools ; that these conferences met for comparison of views in the month of December last ; and that full reports of those conferences have been made to the Committee of Ten. It was supposed, when the executive committee of this Association held a meeting last winter, that the final report of the Committee of Ten would be presented last July to the body which created it, and that an address from the chairman of the Committee of Ten might be an interesting feature in the program of the present meeting. Unfortunately, certain of the reports of the conferences were delayed, so that it has been impossible, up to the present time, to prepare the final report of the Committee of Ten. Very naturally, President Eliot, the chairman of the committee, felt somewhat reluctant to appear here to speak on the subject an-

nounced ; but, as was to be expected from a man who is well known for strictness and sacredness in fulfilling his business engagements, he felt himself bound by his acceptance of the invitation of the executive committee, and it is to that fact that we shall owe the pleasure of hearing from him this evening on the subject announced on the program—Secondary School Programs, and the Conferences of December, 1892. I have the pleasure of presenting to you President Eliot, of Harvard University.

CHARLES W. ELIOT : Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen :—Mr. Tetlow has stated to you the dilemma in which I find myself at this moment. I accepted, on the 10th of February, an invitation to speak to-night on this subject ; I then forgot that I had accepted the invitation, until about two weeks and a half ago I was suddenly confronted with a proof of the program of this and to-morrow's meetings. Now, the reports of the conferences are not yet published. Of course, I must speak here in my individual capacity, and not as the chairman of the Committee of Ten which arranged the conferences ; and I express my own opinions, not those of the committee, and not those of the conferences themselves. I shall feel at liberty, however, to tell you something about these conferences.

In the first place, they were arranged by a committee, itself appointed by the National Educational Association, a body which holds an annual meeting, and generally collects at that meeting a considerable sum of money in fees, but has heretofore spent no money on educational researches. The association made, through its directors, an appropriation of \$2,500 for the present research, and this was the first appropriation of the kind it ever made. It was an attempt to bring together college and school men in consultation concerning the best methods of teaching each subject which enters largely into the programs of secondary schools, the proper limits of each subject, the best modes of testing attainment in those subjects, and the feasibility of attaining a tolerable uniformity of topic, method and standard throughout our wide country. Every member of the committee appointed at Saratoga served ; that is, the ten gentlemen originally named by the Council of Education all served, and were glad to do so. They represented universities, colleges, public schools and endowed schools. In preparation for their work, an attempt was made to present in

tabular form a statement of the number of subjects used in the secondary schools in this country, of the time allotted to each principal subject in a large number of schools ; and, as an inference from the time-allotment, of the proportional expenditure made in a large variety of schools on each subject entering into the program. This information was sought from about two hundred secondary schools of various kinds scattered all over the country. In the three months that were available for the preparation of this table, only about forty schools could be tabulated, with proper verification of every statement by the authorities of the schools ; but these forty schools were characteristic schools, various as regards their mode of government, the length of their courses, and their environment.

It appeared from the table—and this is the first point to which I ask your attention—that there is no uniformity in the treatment of any subject which enters into the secondary school programs in this country ; and that, even with regard to long used subjects, like Latin, Greek, and algebra, there is great diversity of practice with regard to the limits of the subjects, the methods of teaching, and the time-allotments. The utmost diversity may be said to prevail on all these points in secondary school programs as they exist in the United States to-day. It did appear, however, from this table, that nearly forty separate subjects are used in secondary schools in the United States, of which about thirteen are used in a comparatively small number of schools, while twenty-seven separate subjects are used in a large number of secondary schools. This fact alone is highly suggestive with regard to the nature of secondary school programs in this country.

After this tabular statement had been laid before the Committee of Ten, the Committee met and decided to have nine separate conferences on the following subjects :—Latin ; Greek ; English ; other modern languages ; mathematics ; physics, chemistry, and astronomy as one group ; natural history as another group, including, of course, botany and zoology ; history ; and geography, the latter term being used in a comprehensive sense to include political and physical geography. The Committee determined that there should be ten men in each of these conferences ; that they should be taken from all over the country ; and that they should be chosen equally from colleges and schools. They proceeded to select the persons for each conference ; they chose nine-

ty persons for the nine conferences, and then selected a considerable body of substitutes—three or four for each conference. Of the ninety persons originally selected, seventy served ; the other twenty places were filled, twelve by substitutes chosen by the Committee of Ten, and the other eight by substitutes chosen by a sub-committee of the Committee of Ten authorized for that purpose. On the 28th of December last these nine conferences met in nine different places, except that the Latin and Greek conferences, by determination of the Committee of Ten, met at Ann Arbor, though in separate rooms, and the three scientific conferences at or near Chicago, in order that they might hold a combined session if they wished to. Of the ninety gentlemen appointed to meet on the 28th of December, eighty-eight reported for duty. Two did not report and gave no notice that they intended to absent themselves. The conferences sat for three days. As they were ultimately organized, the membership represented fairly colleges and schools ; it also represented the variety of colleges and universities in this country, and the variety of schools. They were distributed with remarkable evenness over the whole area of our country. This being the case, I think we should all have supposed that these conferences could not be brought to any agreement ; or, rather, that they would have presented, each on its own subject, irreconcilable diversities of opinion. The result was just the opposite. Of the nine conferences, seven presented to the Committee of Ten unanimous reports ; that is, they agreed on all the points which they desired to bring to the attention of the Committee of Ten. In the other two conferences, there was some diversity of opinion ; but the minority report in one conference was signed by only one member, and in the other conference there were only two dissenting opinions, and those two did not relate to very important points. Therefore, the unanimity of these conferences is remarkable, and ought to carry great weight. As Mr. Tetlow said, two of the reports of the conference which should have been received the first of April were greatly delayed. They were not received until July, and one of them, indeed, could not be obtained in a corrected proof until September ; hence the difficulty in which I find myself placed at this moment. I can not state to you what the recommendations of the conferences are ; and I can not state to you what the report of the Committee of Ten is likely to be, because that report has not been agreed upon.

I can, however, call your attention to several rather important points which have come to my knowledge through my connection with this inquiry.

I may first point out that this is an attempt at temporary co-operative action by schools and colleges, just as this young association is an attempt at permanent coöperation. I believe that this coöperative action is to be very productive in the future, and that these early attempts to secure coöperation deserve hearty support and commendation. The progress of education in this country is more likely to be hastened by this coöperative action among schools and colleges than by any other influence.

I have spoken of the remarkable unanimity of the conferences : let me enter into a little detail in regard to the nature of these agreements. There were four conferences on the teaching of language, namely, the conferences on Latin, English, Greek, and modern languages. Now, it appears in the reports of these conferences that essentially similar methods of teaching are recommended for all these languages. They all dwell on the importance of reading aloud the language to be studied, of writing in the language to be studied, and of not dissociating the writing of any language from translating the language ; they all desire accurate and idiomatic translation ; indeed, on all important points touching the mode of teaching a language, these four conferences, so diverse in personality, so diverse in subject-matter, nevertheless come to common conclusions. The same thing may be said of the three scientific conferences. They emphasize the same points in method ; the great superiority, for instance, of laboratory teaching over text-book teaching, the value of laboratory note-books, and the value of laboratory examinations in combination with examinations on paper. There is great consent among the three scientific conferences as to the true method of teaching science, both in the secondary and in the elementary schools.

There is remarkable agreement, also, among all the conferences in this respect : they all indicate in one way or another, sometimes by direct statement, sometimes by implication, that, in their opinion, the teaching of every single subject in a secondary school should help the teaching of every other subject. Thus, the science teachers believe that the careful use of the laboratory note book, and the practice of carefully describing in writing, or in oral

speech, a scientific experiment or result, can be made to contribute to the acquisition of a simple and concise English style. The history teachers believe that history can be made a vehicle for the study of English, and that it should always be associated with the study of geography ; and the conference on English distinctly asks that the study of the English language be supported by the contemporaneous study of history and geography. In many ways, the conferences indicated their belief that support should be gained in the study of every subject for all the other subjects.

On another very interesting point the conferences and the Committee of Ten were unanimous ; ninety-eight gentlemen actually working in educational institutions concurred on this point,—that no distinction ought to be made in the manner of teaching a pupil in a secondary school because of his destination. I must explain that a little. The Committee of Ten asked whether the conferences would recommend that their respective subjects be taught differently to young people who were going to college, or were going to a scientific school, or were not going to either. The unanimous answer was that they should all be taught alike. Of course, they did not mean that every pupil should pursue the same subject to the same extent through the same number of years : what they meant was, that, if a pupil is to study Latin, he should study it in the same way and to the same extent, during all the time he studies it, whether he is going to college, or to a scientific school, or to neither ; if he is to study algebra, he should study it, so long as he studies it, in the same manner, no matter what his known or conjectured destination. I say that all these ninety-eight experts agreed on this proposition. You perceive the scope of that single principle. It is the practice, the very general practice, both in our high schools and in our academies to arrange courses, running three, four, five or even six years, differently made up for pupils of different destinations, the destination of the pupil at the start being too often guessed at or imagined. The principle on which the conferences agreed is not consistent with that method. Thus, if Latin is taught in the first year of an academy five times a week, every pupil in that academy who studies Latin at all in his first year, should take Latin five times a week ; in the second year, every pupil that studies Latin at all should take Latin five times a week ; and so on through the academy, every

pupil that studies Latin at all in any year should be treated just like every other pupil. Now, the contrary is the case in many of our secondary schools. Double courses, so to speak, are provided ; for those who are going to college, Latin courses four or five times a week ; for those who are not going to college, twice or thrice a week. The rates of progress in these two classes are different ; the instruction is, to a certain extent, duplicated, and, therefore, paid for twice ; or, perhaps, not twice, but more than once. I have not time to dwell at length upon the great importance of this principle laid down by the conferences ; but I think it will commend itself to you as fundamental. It would work a considerable change in the ordinary program of American high schools. Doubts will, perhaps, arise in your minds as to the possibility of adopting this principle throughout ; but I now wish simply to call your attention to the proposition that these ninety-eight experts, coming as they did from schools and colleges, and from very diverse schools and colleges, agreed that the right principle was to treat all pupils alike, so long as they studied any particular subject, no matter what their known or conjectured destination.

There was another point in which the recommendations of the conferences closely resembled each other ; they all seemed to wish to get their subjects studied earlier than now. The only exception was Greek. The Greek conference did not seem to think that they could get their subject back any farther. Every other conference made claims, or suggestions, or positive recommendations concerning putting their subject back into the elementary schools. Therefore, although the primary object of the National Council of Education was to get a research made into secondary schools,—their methods, programs and so forth,—the conference reports, as a matter of fact, deal considerably with the programs of schools below the high schools and academies. Some of them frankly state that it is impossible to deal satisfactorily with their subjects in the secondary schools until the study of the subjects is improved in the schools below the high schools and academies ; and they, therefore, offer prescriptions for the grammar schools, and even for the primary schools. Some of the most interesting suggestions made by the conferences relate to the elementary schools.

The next general comment which I feel free to make on the

reports of these conferences is that the new subjects all want to get upon perfect equality with the old. By new subjects, I mean English, the modern languages, chemistry and physics, natural history and history. Mathematics and geography are, of course, old subjects, but even in regard to these the conferences make important suggestions for change. Indeed, if I were to be asked which report was the most revolutionary, I should say, without hesitation, that the report on geography was the most revolutionary, although geography is one of the oldest subjects in our grammar and secondary schools. The new subjects wish to get upon a perfect equality with the old ; they believe that the interests of education demand this equality. The advocates of the new subjects show how they may be made equal in dignity and difficulty to the old subjects, and therefore, as they believe, equal in training power. They also believe that they may be made equal, if not superior, in interest, or power to attract and hold the attention of pupils. On this account, some of the conferences' reports on the new subjects are long,—as, for instance, the report on history. That conference felt called upon to show how an eight years' course of instruction in history could be made interesting, serious, dignified and hard, and, therefore, fit to command respect and to give competent training. They recognized, of course, that the present position of history in the schools answers to none of these aspirations. We all of us know of schools, excellent in other respects, in which the teaching of history is relegated to the few weeks previous to some critical examination, when, perhaps, a brief cram is provided for. Now, what a change is proposed, when expert teachers of history suggest that the study of history be made equal in seriousness and in length of time-allotment to the study of Latin or mathematics ! And yet that suggestion illustrates just what is proposed by these conferences ; they all wish to make each their own subject equal in dignity, importance, and seriousness to that subject which has the greatest dignity, importance and length of time-allotment in the schools as they now exist. They seek, in short, the equality of subjects, an equality never recognized in secondary school programs in the United States, or in English programs ; never fully recognized in the German ; and more completely realized in the French programs than in any other. You will observe that there is a distinction between asking for the

equality of all the subjects, and asking that all subjects receive equal attention in a given school or from a given pupil. Those are two entirely distinct things. It would be possible to make all subjects equal, in the sense which I have described, and yet the pupils in a given school might not devote equal attention to all subjects by any means. I shall touch upon this point again a little later. In consequence of this desire for the equality of all the subjects, the conferences demand, as a rule, about equal time-allotments for their subjects ; although I may say that the demands of the scientific conferences on this point are distinctly moderate. Nevertheless, they are all anxious about the time-allotment, and this equality of time is, indeed, a necessary preliminary to the establishment of equality among subjects in the secondary schools. If Latin, for example, is taught five times a week for four years, it may be made a very valuable element in the training of the pupil that pursues it to that extent. If the same pupil studies history twice a week for one year, history can not be made for that pupil to compare in educational value with the Latin which he studies five times a week for four years. An approximate equality of time-allotment is essential to the establishment of the equality of subjects which the conferences have sought. You must not think, therefore, of time-allotment in the school programs as an unimportant, or even as a mechanical matter. No comprehensive policy in regard to the treatment of different subjects can be properly carried out without careful attention to the subject of time-allotment.

Now, here were nine conferences, all very desirous to get each its own subject put on a perfect equality with all other subjects ; and in these nine conferences there were represented about fourteen principal subjects which in school programs we should call separate ; for you will observe that some of the titles of the conferences included more than one subject, as, for instance, botany and zoology under the title of natural history. This number of subjects is a great reduction in the number of subjects now actually used in American secondary school programs ; but if these fourteen subjects are to be put on an equality in time-allotment, what a large sum total of time will be called for ! There are, however, some limitations on this demand. For example, the mathematical conference wants to get mathematics placed on an equality with Latin ; but they have three important subjects under the head of mathematics,—

arithmetic, algebra and geometry, beside trigonometry ; and they do not claim for each one of these an equality with Latin ; they only claim for arithmetic, geometry and algebra, taken together, an equality with Latin. I was rather surprised, therefore, on adding up all the claims for time on the secondary school program, which resulted from the combined recommendations of the conferences, to find that the total amount was by no means entirely out of the question. It was, of course, out of the question for any single pupil ; it was not out of the question for many schools, even if their resources now in hand could not be increased. Thus, this sum total, regarded as so many weekly hours or periods of teaching, is exceeded in a good many secondary schools of our country already. Take, for instance, an urban high school which maintains five, six, seven, eight, or even nine distinct four-years' courses, there being considerable diversities between these courses ; I know several schools of that sort where the sum total of the hours of teaching per week decidedly exceeds the sum total of hours of teaching per week called for by the nine conferences, all seeking approximately equal time-allotments, each for its own subject. Moreover, there are endowed academies in this country which already provide as many, or nearly as many, hours of teaching per week as are called for by the nine conferences, each to get all it asks. Therefore, so far as school resources go, there are some secondary schools in this country which already have resources enough to meet the demands of the conferences. In other words, they would not have to ask their trustees, or committees, for additional teaching force in order to meet the demands of the conferences. This, I confess, was rather a surprise to me, and a welcome surprise. It is a fact, indeed, that these many-course programs are not truly economical. If the practice recommended by the conference were carried out, there would result some saving of teaching force ; because it would no longer be necessary to provide two or three different courses of Latin, for example, or algebra, or natural history, to be carried on at different rates through the same year in the same school. That statement, however, ought to be qualified by the admission that there is an economy in the present duplicate courses in some secondary schools, if inferior teachers can be employed for the shorter courses ; but that economy is effected only through the employment of inferior teachers for the in-

ferior courses. The truly economical way, in a secondary school, as in a college, is to teach each subject according to the one best method, and to require all pupils who pursue it in one and the same year,—the same year-class, I mean, or class-year,—to pursue it in just the same manner and to the same extent. That is the true economy, whether in school or college.

I now come to another aspect of this sum total of teaching hours demanded by all the conferences taken together, each seeking the equality of all subjects. Although this demand is not too great for the resources of many schools existing in this country, it is clearly too great for the powers of any single pupil. If I remember rightly, the number of weekly school periods demanded by all the conferences in a four-years' secondary school course varied from about twenty-five weekly periods in the first year to about thirty-seven or thirty-eight periods in the last two years. Now, even twenty-five weekly periods are too many for any single pupil; and, of course, thirty-eight weekly periods are impossible. What is the inevitable result? The inevitable result is the selection of studies for the individual pupil, or for the individual school,—a selection of studies is the inevitable result of attempting to carry out the recommendations of the conferences. Of course there is much selection of studies now in high schools and academies; but the school generally makes the selection by establishing different four-years' courses for pupils of different destinations. The selection necessary in the programs of the conferences might be made either by courses running through three or four years, or by subject in each year. A school would say, "We will teach such and such subjects and no others"; or, a school which could afford to teach all the subjects—and there would be many that could afford to teach well all the subjects recommended by the conferences,—would say, "We will indicate a course or group of studies for each pupil," or, "We will permit the pupil, under advice of teachers and parents, to select a group of studies to be pursued in each year." However the selection were made, whether by the school or by the pupil, it is clear that selection of studies would be essential, simply because the total amount of instruction provided under the recommendations of the conferences would exceed the capacity of the individual pupil.

Imagine, then, that a program or schedule were written down,

in which the periods desired by each conference for each subject in each year of a four-years' course appeared. The sum total would be too much for a pupil; hence it would be by no means necessary that every school should teach all these subjects. Any school principal, or any superintendent of a system of schools, could, however, from this schedule prepare his own program by making his own group or groups from the schedule. If he followed the schedule, he would teach all the subjects that he did teach for the time proposed by the conferences, and with the choice of the topics, to the extent, and in the method proposed by the conferences. So far as the mode of dealing with a subject went, therefore, there might arise in this way uniformity of method all over the United States. It would be possible that uniformity in this sense should come about all over the United States, although the programs made for particular schools, or separate communities, should vary. The boy who studied algebra, for example, in San Francisco, would study it as long, would cover as many subjects in algebra, and would be instructed in about the same way, as would a boy in Boston who studied the same subject. The same would be true of every other subject in the list,—of Latin, Greek, geometry, or botany. There has been great desire on the part of secondary school teachers and college men in this country for uniformity. Close connection between secondary schools on the one hand, and colleges, universities, and scientific schools on the other, would be greatly facilitated, if uniformity of program could be attained. Moreover, the frequent transfers of pupils from one city to another, from country to city, and from city to country would be made with less loss. But, in the very various conditions which exist in the widely scattered communities of the United States, it is impossible to hope for one single uniform program in secondary schools. I am not sure that it would be desirable. But it is possible to hope for, and I am sure it is desirable to procure, all over the country, uniformity of teaching by subject.

Here, then, are certain main points which might be covered by the report of the Committee of Ten. It might be possible to recommend, in the light of the conference reports, first, a wise selection of subjects, and a reduction of the present number of subjects; next it might be possible to describe the desirable method of treating each subject, so that each subject should be

taught in what experts declare to be the best method. Again, we might realize the recommendation of approximate equality of time-allotment for each subject. From these combined recommendations there might result a flexible and comprehensive schedule of studies, which would serve as a source of various programs applicable under the various conditions of rural and urban populations in the various States of our Union.

I turn now to another subject of investigation which was set before the Committee of Ten, namely, the subject of requirements for admission to the higher institutions,—to scientific schools and colleges. Is there any hope, as the result of this investigation, that the connection between secondary schools and the colleges and scientific schools can be made straighter and closer? I think you may see that there is at least a clue to a method by which the association of these two distinct sets of educational institutions may be made closer. The colleges now generally,—perhaps I should not say generally, because the practice to which I refer is commoner in the west than in the east,—yet, at least, a majority of our colleges and scientific schools have several gates of admission, and the gates have gradually diminishing heights. He who jumps over the highest gate may be a candidate for A.B. ; he who clears the next, may be a candidate for Ph.B. or S.B. ; the candidate who goes over the third gate may obtain the degree of Bachelor of Letters ; and there are often several lower gates ; but we generally come, as a last degree, to the degree of Bachelor of Agricultural Science. Now, this is a well recognized method in a large number of colleges and universities in this country. Unfortunately the requirements for admission to the scientific schools of the country, and to the technological institutions, and the agricultural schools, have always been much lower than to the so-called classical colleges ; and are very much lower to-day. And yet there is no difference of age, or very little difference of age, between the students who go into the classical colleges and those who go into the scientific schools ; indeed, the average age of the students admitted into the scientific departments is actually higher in many institutions than the age of the students admitted into the classical departments. This diversity of admission requirement is an immense misfortune in American education. It is a diversity of requirement which embraces the selection of

subjects, the scope of each subject, the method of teaching each subject, and the method of testing attainments in the several subjects.

We have in this country another evil of very serious character, namely, that the schools of law and medicine have been, as a rule, wide open to anybody walking into them from the street, without passing any admission examination whatever, or submitting to any inquiry into previous academic training. This is the deplorable fact with regard to a great majority of these professional schools in the United States. At this moment, there are a few institutions which maintain examinations for admission to their schools of law and medicine ; but these examinations are of low grade. Take Harvard University as an example : its examinations for admission to the law school and the medical school will not compare for a moment in difficulty, or in the time required to prepare for them, with the examination for admission to Harvard college. Yet, the men that go into these professional schools are generally three or four years older than the men who go into college. Now, this is a prodigious evil in our country, and greatly affects the resort to secondary schools throughout the United States. The resort to secondary schools would be greatly increased, if parents and children knew that nobody could get into an American professional school unless he had been through a good course in a high-school or academy. At present the candidate knows just the reverse,—that he can get into a professional school in most places without ever having been to school at all. This is the condition which we have to confront ;—three grades of attainment are required for the three different classes of institutions for the higher education ; the colleges have the best grade, the scientific schools the next best, and the schools of law and medicine the lowest. Now, whither can we look for improvement in regard to these various requirements ? Do the conference reports give us any hope in that direction ? Yes, with the coöperation of the colleges and scientific schools ; no, unless they are satisfied that it is their interest to coöperate with the secondary schools. Imagine the nine principal subjects, represented in these nine conferences, actually put on an equality with each other in seriousness, dignity and disciplinary value ; and imagine a great variety of four-years' courses all made up from the schedule of the combined conference recommendations, and

carried out in hundreds of high-schools and academies. Should it make any difference to a college whether a given candidate for admission to the college had studied this set of four or five subjects recommended by the conferences for a four years' course, or that set of four or five subjects, both sets being taught in the manner recommended by the conferences? Should it make any difference whether the candidate for admission presented,—to state the case in an extreme way—Latin, Greek, English, French, and German; or mathematics, physics, chemistry, natural history, and history? Clearly, if the recommendations of the conferences had been effectively carried out, the education received by the youth who had taken the first group should be just as good as that of the youth who had taken the second group. One should be as good as the other; otherwise, real equality would not have been attained. Now, I know this looks to us in a high degree chimerical at first sight. Is it possible that the subject of history should be made equal in training value to Latin? That does not look possible to most of us who studied Latin a good deal and history very little. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that the conferences will succeed in showing how that equality of training value can be secured; and, therefore, I believe that the conferences are going to help secondary schools to offer to colleges, scientific schools and professional schools candidates for admission with preliminary trainings of equal value, though obtained on different sets of subjects. I need not say that we are not in sight of such a condition of things now. Most of you are perfectly familiar with the kind of substitute which is now offered to a boy in a high school for the classical course which consists of Latin, Greek, Mathematics, with a little history and possibly the elements of a modern language. The substitute now offered ordinarily consists of English, mathematics, history, geography, botany, zoölogy, astronomy, geology, mineralogy, political economy, ethics, and perhaps the elements of one or two modern languages;—an extraordinary number of scraps of miscellaneous subjects, instead of a limited number of substantial subjects each treated with some thoroughness. Our adverse opinion concerning the possibility of making subjects equal for training value is really founded on our own convictions of the great superiority of the old-fashioned, solid classical program in the academy, and the

high school, to the scrappy, ineffective programs which are substituted for the classical program in the inferior courses of our high-schools and academies. I use the word inferior deliberately, feeling sure that you will at once recognize the fact that, as now constituted, these substitutes are inferior. It is one object of the conferences to show the way to make the so-called English, or modern, side of our high schools and academies just as firm, substantial, and valuable as the classical side. We shall never attain to an equality of subjects until the English or modern course in secondary schools has been made as solid as the classical. No elementary, superficial, and hasty treatment of a long series of subjects can possibly commend itself to the educated community as likely to produce the good effects of the consecutive, thorough and prolonged treatment of a smaller group. We shall never know, for example, whether Latin and history are equally well adapted to secure the suitable development of the human mind, until we have given history the same chance that we have given Latin. I look forward, therefore, with some hope to the reports of the conferences, as showing the way to attain an approximate equality of training value for different subjects in secondary schools, and hence some serious modifications of the requirements for admission to colleges, scientific schools and professional schools, whereby the relations of these two classes of institutions shall become closer and more effectual. The closer union of the higher with the secondary education is an object, I need not say, of the highest national importance. The closest connection will be established by making requirements for admission to the higher institutions match requirements for graduation at the lower, no matter in what group of subjects.

I have already spoken unreasonably long ; I ask your pardon for so doing, and stop here. But, if any gentlemen present are disposed to ask a few questions, I shall be glad to answer them.

THE CHAIR. Will anyone avail himself of the invitation of President Eliot as given ?

Mr. WILLIAM F. BRADBURY. I have been very much interested in hearing the President, but there is one question that occurs to me that I should like to ask. The President has said that one should be taught in the same way in one subject as in

another, and that a boy in San Francisco should be taught in the same way as a boy in the east ; and I wondered whether he used the word "boy" in a generic sense. We know that there is one of the amendments of the constitution which says no distinction shall be made on account of age, sex, color or previous condition of servitude. Having under my charge one hundred and twenty young ladies, all, I suppose, with their eyes upon some university, it occurred to me to ask whether in these conferences the question of sex was considered ; whether it was considered that a girl should be taught geometry in the same way as a boy, or whether a girl should be taught geometry at all or not ; or whether a girl should be taught algebra the same as a boy.

PRESIDENT ELIOT. I used "boy" in what Mr. Bradbury calls a generic sense ; that is to say, the Conferences make no distinction whatever between boys and girls in their recommendations. They treat of the selection of subjects, the scope of the subjects and the time-allotment ; and they emphatically believe that the destination of the pupil should not affect the mode of dealing with any subject for that pupil. It might affect the number of years that a given pupil studied a given subject ; but while any pupil is studying any given subject he should be treated like all the rest.

I hope I did not say that all subjects were to be taught in the same way ; that, of course, would be incorrect. The several conferences describe the several ways in which they believe their respective subjects should be taught. The language conferences agree very well as to the best mode of teaching languages ; the scientific conferences agree very well as to the best mode of teaching sciences ; but the way in which a language is to be taught is somewhat different from the way in which a science is to be taught.

The question of Mr. Bradbury is a natural one ; but the conferences pay absolutely no attention to the question of sex, and leave one to infer that they did not think that any discriminations, as regards relation of subject, scope of subject, method of teaching or time-allotment, were necessary as between the sexes.

At the close of this brief discussion an adjournment was made to another room for social intercourse. Here the members of the

Association were entertained by music from the Yale Glee Club and Banjo Club, and through the hospitality of the University were served with refreshments. The occasion was one of great enjoyment to the large number present.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1893.

The Association was called to order by the President at 9:15 a.m., and held a session for the transaction of business.

The Executive Committee reported, through the Secretary, nominating for membership a list of fifty-six persons. By a unanimous vote these were constituted members of the Association. Their names are here given :

Edward H. Atherton, Master in Girls' Latin School, Boston ; James A. Beatley, Junior Master in English High School, Boston ; Malcom Booth, Teacher in High School, New Haven ; Homer W. Brainard, Teacher in High School, Hartford ; Le-Baron R. Briggs, Professor of English and Dean of Harvard College ; George E. Browne, of Browne and Nichols's School, Cambridge ; Ellen S. Burrell, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Wellesley College ; Albert S. Cook, Professor of English at Yale ; Rest F. Curtis, Associate Principal of Chauncey-Hall School, Boston ; S. Warren Davis, Master in High School, Newton ; John B. Diman, Assistant in University Grammar School, Providence ; George T. Dippold, Assistant Professor of Modern Languages at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston ; Amos E. Dolbear, Professor of Physics and Astronomy, Tufts College ; William A. Francis, Professor of Mathematics, Phillips Exeter Academy ; Simeon T. Frost, Principal of High School, Meriden ; Charles H. Grandgent, Director of Modern Language Instruction in Public Schools of Boston ; Frank P. Graves, Professor of Classical Philology, Tufts College ; William B. Graves, Professor of Natural Science, Phillips Academy, Andover ; Edwin A. Grosvenor, Professor of French in Amherst College and of History in Smith College ; Paul H. Hanus, Assistant Professor of the History and Art of Teaching in Harvard University ; Belle Hawes, Instructor in Latin in Wellesley College ; Ralph Hoffman, Teacher in Browne and Nichols's School, Cambridge ; Malvina A. Howe, Teacher of French in High School, Hartford ;

Julia J. Irvine, Professor of Greek in Wellesley College ; Martin E. Jensen, Instructor in Science at Norwich Free Academy ; Henry Lefavour, Professor of Physics in Williams College ; James I. Manatt, Professor of Greek Literature and History in Brown University ; Frank E. Mellen, Teacher in Classical High School, Worcester ; Walter R. Marsh, Instructor in Mathematics in Phillips Exeter Academy ; Arthur Marvin, Instructor in English at the Hopkins Grammar School, New Haven ; William Orr, Jr., Instructor in Science in High School, Springfield ; Sarah Woodman Paul, Secretary of Wellesley College ; Horatio M. Reynolds, Professor of Greek in Yale University ; Theodore W. Richards, Instructor in Chemistry in Harvard University ; Henry B. Richardson, Professor of German in Amherst College ; Edward R. Ruggles, Professor of German in Dartmouth College ; Wallace C. Sabine, Instructor in Physics in Harvard University ; Daniel S. Sanford, Head Master of High School, Brookline ; Lorenzo Sears, Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in Brown University ; A. P. Somes, Principal of High School, Killingly ; Edwin A. Start, Instructor in History in Tufts College ; J. R. S. Sterrett, Professor of Greek in Amherst College ; Rev. James Stoddard, Principal of the Episcopal Academy of Connecticut, Cheshire ; William Abbott Stone, Instructor in Physics, Phillips Exeter Academy ; George L. Stowell, Principal of Private School, Lexington ; Augustus T. Swift, Master of Modern Languages in Hotchkiss School ; Horace D. Taft, Head Master of Mr. Taft's School, Watertown, Conn. ; William J. Tucker, President of Dartmouth College ; Edith S. Tufts, Teacher of Greek in Dana Hall, Wellesley ; Samuel E. Turner, Teacher of Greek in Private School, Cambridge ; Harry W. Tyler, Professor of Mathematics in Massachusetts Institute of Technology ; Henry M. Tyler, Professor of Greek in Smith College ; Mary A. Willcox, Professor of Zoölogy in Wellesley College ; George G. Wilson, Professor of Political and Social Science in Brown University ; Alice M. Wing, Teacher of Latin in High School, Springfield ; Charles H. Zimmerman, Teacher of Classics in High School, New Haven.

The Secretary, Mr. Ray Greene Huling, of the Cambridge English High School, reported that the membership at the beginning of the meeting had included one hundred and eighty-nine persons, of whom ninety-two were from the colleges and

ninety-seven from the schools. By the election of new members the present membership becomes two hundred and forty-five, including one hundred and seventeen representatives of the colleges and one hundred and twenty-eight representatives of the schools. Of the latter, seventy-six represent private or endowed institutions and fifty-two represent public high schools.

The same speaker, as Treasurer, presented the following report of receipts and expenditures, which was accepted :

RECEIPTS.

Balance, Oct. 15, 1892,	\$ 63 80
Assessments collected :	
1890-1, (1)	\$ 1 50
1891-2, (15)	22 50
1892-3, (168)	252 00
1893-4, (3)	4 50
	<u>280 50</u>
	\$344 30

PAYMENTS.

Printing,	\$ 83 61
Postage, Stationery, Expressage and Telegrams,	41 94
Caterer (1892),	63 75
Janitor (1892),	5 00
	<u>\$194 30</u>
Balance Oct. 13, 1893,	\$150 00
Assessments Due :	
1891-2, (5)	\$ 7 50
1892-3, (17)	25 50
	<u>\$ 33 00</u>
Assets,	\$183 00

This is believed to be sufficient to meet all payments on account of the present meeting.

The Nominating Committee, by its chairman, President Dwight, of Yale University, reported, nominating a list of officers for the ensuing year. Their report was received, and the officers named were unanimously elected, as follows :

President, John Tetlow.

Vice-Presidents, L. Clark Seelye and Cecil F. P. Bancroft.

Secretary and Treasurer, Ray Greene Huling.

Executive Committee (with the preceding), Helen A. Shafer, Horace M. Willard, Charles W. Eliot, Elmer H. Capen, Francis A. Waterhouse.

The report of the Committee to confer with the Commission of Colleges in New England on Admission Examinations, by the chairman, Mr. William F. Bradbury of the Cambridge Latin School, presented the following report :

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONFER WITH THE COMMISSION
OF COLLEGES IN NEW ENGLAND ON ADMISSION
EXAMINATIONS.**

Your Committee beg leave to report that in accordance with an invitation they met the commission in Boston, April 28, last.

By previous arrangement each member of the committee had prepared a paper on an assigned topic with special reference to what was considered the only function of your committee, *viz.* : "the consideration of uniform requirements."

Mr. Peck, of Providence, presented the subject of English with special reference to the lack of acquiescence on the part of Yale in the requirements recommended by the Associated Colleges of New England.

Mr. Collar, of Boston, read a very elaborate paper containing a "Syllabus for the Teaching of Latin."

Mr. Bradbury, of Cambridge, showed the lack of uniformity in the requirements in Greek, and called attention to the peculiar attitude of Wellesley in not admitting without *additional* examination those who had passed "The Womens' Examinations," which every strong New England college accepts without question. Attention was also called to the elaborate statement required in the certification of a candidate to Wellesley; a statement which if truthfully and completely answered would take for each candidate, not less than two hours—more likely more—of investigation among the teachers and past records of the school, and in many cases *could not* be answered. If one had a class of twenty to certify it would take him more than forty hours to prepare the certificate—or more than eight full school sessions; rather an expensive piece of work if a teacher's time is to be counted as worth anything.

At the beginning of the conference attention was called to the vote of this Association at its preceding meeting, *viz.* :

1. That the Commission of Colleges in New England on Admission Examinations be authorized by the Associated Colleges

to arrange for at least one conference annually with the Committee to Confer with the Commission of Colleges in New England of this Association.

It was answered to this by the Commission—that they already had this authority.

2. That the function of the Commission, instead of being limited as at present to the consideration of uniform requirements, be so enlarged as to include the whole subject of requirements for admission to college and methods of examining.

In relation to this second proposition it was suggested by your committee that if there was any objection to the phraseology on the part of any member of the Commission, your committee—so far as they have the power—would accept any suggestion of change.

3. That the Commission be authorized to propose questions for discussion to the Executive Committee of this Association.

In relation to this it was stated that Harvard already approves.

Since this conference the following letter has been received from the Secretary of the Commission :

9 Lloyd Street,

PROVIDENCE, R. I., 11 October, 1893.

To WILLIAM F. BRADBURY, ESQ., Chairman of the Committee appointed by the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools to confer with the Commission of Colleges in New England on Admission Examinations.

DEAR SIR :

On the 28th of last April you and Mr. W. C. Collar and Mr. W. T. Peck, the other members of your Committee, appeared before our Commission and made certain communications regarding the requirements for admission to college, and, in particular, regarding the requirements in Greek and in Latin. The Commission, after hearing with much interest what you communicated, discussed the questions thus raised, and took the action which you will find recorded in the printed paper attached to this letter. The committees named in that paper have under consideration the matters into which they were instructed to inquire. I cannot inform you precisely how many colleges have approved of the last recommendation recorded in the printed paper.

It is hoped that at your approaching annual meeting new light may be thrown on the very important questions now before us. The Commission sincerely desires to promote to the utmost of its power the great interests which you likewise regard as of such vital importance to the colleges and the preparatory schools.

The following is the list of books recommended by the Commission to the Colleges, to be adopted for the English requirements for 1897 :

Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, As You Like It ; Scott, Marmion ; Longfellow, Evangeline ; Burke, Speech on Conciliation with America ; Macaulay, Life of Samuel Johnson ; De Foe, History of the Plague in London ; Irving, Tales of a Traveler ; Hawthorne, Twice Told Tales ; George Eliot, Silas Marner.

With most sincere esteem, I remain, dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

WILLIAM CAREY POLAND,
Secretary of the Commission of Colleges.

[Appended.]

9 Lloyd Street,
PROVIDENCE, R. I., 9 June, 1893.

At the annual meeting of the Commission of Colleges in New England on Admission Examinations, held on the 28th and 29th of last April, the following votes were passed :

1. That in response to the communication made to-day by the Committee from the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, a Committee of three be appointed to inquire into the present condition of the requirements in Latin and in Greek.

2. That this committee have power to call a conference of teachers of Latin and of Greek, one in each of these departments from each college, the expenses of the delegates to this conference to be paid by the Commission.

3. That to this committee be referred also the communications regarding the preparatory work in Greek and in Latin presented by the Committee from the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools.

In accordance with these votes the Committee appointed to consider the requirements in Latin and in Greek are Professors C. L. Smith, J. K. Lord, F. E. Woodruff. The Committee from the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools mentioned above, consisted of Mr. W. F. Bradbury of Cambridge, Mass., Mr. W. C. Collar of Roxbury, Mass., Mr. W. T. Peck of Providence, R. I.

Further, the Commission voted :

That a Committee be appointed to inquire whether a lack of uniformity in other subjects than Latin and Greek is caused by the existing forms of certificates for admission.

The Committee appointed in accordance with this vote consists of Professors W. C. Poland and J. K. Lord.

The Commission also voted :

That we recommend to the several faculties the adoption of the following amendment to the Constitution :

"That the function of the Commission be so enlarged as to include the whole subject of requirements for admission to college and methods of examining."

It is expected that the annual report of the Commission, giving a more detailed account of the proceedings of the meeting, will be ready for the press before long.

Very respectfully yours,
WILLIAM CAREY POLAND,
Secretary.

Although your committee could not properly present to the Commission any suggestion as to methods of examination, in this report to you it wishes to suggest a method for examining in English. This method will be understood if we call it the " Physics Method."

Let the pupils in the preparatory schools after reading one of the books required for admission, write in a given time, under the eye of the teacher, in a blank book made for this purpose, write, I say, one or more essays, on topics selected from the subject matter of the book. Let this book be kept by the teacher, and given to the pupil only when he is required again to write an essay on some other topic, or some other book.

When the candidate goes to the examination for admission to college, this book, as is now the case with the experiment book in Physics, is to be presented, with the teacher's certified statement entered in the book that the work has been done under the eye of the teacher, at the several times named at the end of each essay.

This book can be examined or not as the college sees fit, and have such weight as the examiner considers best.

The examination in writing at the college should be merely to see if the candidate can write his mother-tongue, not a test at all of his recollection of the subject matter of the books named in the college requirements.

Some topic from Ancient History, or some topic on which any one can write can be assigned for the test, or it might be the candidate's translation from Greek, Latin, and French. This method as will be seen is the present method, in the 40 or 60 experiment requirements in Physics at Harvard. Any change or demands in the details of the work can be made, as experience may suggest.

This method secures one important thing that has never yet been secured: Every candidate must read the books and write an essay, one or more on each book, or his teacher cannot certify him.

In 1891 a boy went to the examination at Harvard from the Cambridge Latin School who had read but one of the books required, aside from the books actually read in the class to the teacher and these latter he had neglected almost entirely. (He lost his diploma from this cause, and his position in History.) At the examination not one of the books which he had read was selected, and he wrote, as he told me, on something not assigned. He was conditioned in both English and History. In the following September examination, without having read anything more, he tried again and passed, both in English and History.

If he had not passed then he could have tried again of course with the chances decidedly in his favor that by the third time the examiner would certainly strike something that he had read. Thus his chances would grow greater every time, without his lifting a finger to help himself.

This is possible with the present method of examination. But in the method which we propose this certified book is to be the "open-sesame" to the written test at the college.

The present method of selecting topics from the books assigned obliges the candidate to keep in mind the subject matter from some 2000 pages, running from Phoebe Pynchon's *hens* through Emerson's *American Scholar*, to Milton's minor poems, or Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*. The candidate must re-read very hastily during the last year all the books required.

If there is any way to make a person disgusted with any kind of food, it is to stuff him with it to satiety. This is the effect of the present method in English.

By the plan proposed each book can be enjoyed by itself, and the more difficult books, taken of course the last year, can be done more leisurely, more thoroughly, more enjoyably. In this way better work in the preparation for writing good English can be done, and in our opinion the enjoyment of good literature will be secured, not disgust for it.

By no means do we mean to suggest that the essays written in the pass-book are to be all the written work done by the pupil. This can and must be done constantly by the pupil aside entirely from the more formal work that is to be written in the pass-book.

Various modifications, additional restrictions, may be perhaps suggested by teachers or the professors of the colleges, to perfect the proposed plan.

But some such plan for the requirement in English, your committee recommend to the consideration of this Association.

W. F. BRADBURY,

W. C. COLLAR,

WILLIAM T. PECK.

Oct. 14, 1893.

It was voted to accept the report of the Committee to Confer and place it on file. Charles E. Fish was appointed a member of this Committee, to serve three years.

THE CHAIR. The Chair understands from the Chairman of the Committee to Confer that no further report or recommendation is to be presented this morning from that Committee. The Chair also understands that the report to which you have just listened contains a recommendation substantially to this effect : that a plan similar to the one that has been outlined should be adopted by the colleges for examination in English. The object for which the Committee to Confer was originally created was that something practical might result from the conferences that should take place between that Committee and the Commission, and especially from the recommendations that should come to us from the Committee in consequence of those conferences. It may be well for us to discuss this morning some such question as this : Is it the sense of this Association that a plan similar to that outlined in the recommendations of the Committee should be adopted by the colleges of New England as a basis for admission to college ? The Chair will, then, invite expressions of opinion on that question ; or, the Chair awaits any motion on the subject.

MR. WILLIAM C. COLLAR. *Mr. President :* I hope very much, as a member of that committee and as a member of this Association, that this extremely important subject will not be left undiscussed by the Association. It has seemed to me that it might be well to begin the discussion now, but I should doubt whether, considering the rather meagre attendance, it would be expedient for the Association to come to a final vote without more consideration that can be given at present. When Mr. Bradbury read his suggestions to the Committee, they impressed themselves upon the members as exceedingly wise. In inviting remarks,

Mr. President, you spoke of a plan somewhat similar to what Mr. Bradbury has reported,—I should say why not precisely what Mr. Bradbury has reported? It appears to me, after much thought, the most desirable scheme. I think it must be admitted that the existing plan of examination in English has proved to the vast majority of teachers unsatisfactory. I have spoken, perhaps, I may say, with a good deal of feeling, formerly upon this subject. It is unnecessary to recall what I have said; I will only mention one or two things indicating the lines in which I think teachers are dissatisfied. As Mr. Bradbury says in his report, it is really necessary for a candidate to have well in mind almost all the topics of all the books that are required to be read, because the choice may be from one or two books out of the five or six or more that are required; and, if he knew the contents of all the others, but not the two books, for instance, the candidate might make a total failure on the examination.

Now there is nothing like that in any other part of the examination for admission to college in any other subject whatsoever. If a boy knows something about geometry or something about algebra or Latin, then it is likely to appear upon his examination; but he may know a great deal about the books which he has been required to read, and he may have written many compositions in the course of his preparation, but there may be topics set before him, that he can't recall at the time anything really to write about. I consider, therefore, the method of examination as extremely faulty, because it exposes the candidate to such an accident, whereby he may make a failure which he doesn't deserve.

And then I think the examination has worked ill in causing a degree of discouragement amongst preparatory teachers. It is the wish of the colleges, it is the wish of preparatory teachers, undoubtedly, to advance and improve the instruction in English as much as they can. I believe there is a very genuine interest and a very hearty effort on the part of teachers to do the best work that they can in English; but, somehow, the results of the examinations in English are quite unlike what they are in all other subjects. To the teachers it is a small matter, and to the public it is of no account whatever, whether a boy is thoroughly well prepared in English, or ill prepared; but it is a matter of great moment to the candidate himself; and, in justice to the candidates who are put under the screws in writing under such

unfavorable conditions, it seems to me we ought to provide for as fair a judgment as can be made.

There is no subject in my school in which I take so keen an interest as in the preparation in English ; and when, a few years ago, I had myself to teach it, there was nothing in which I so delighted, and nothing in which I felt I could exert such an influence on my boys. But the results, year after year, of the examinations were surprising and discouraging to the boys themselves. I have had, in the last ten years, in every class that has gone out from my school, one boy or two, or sometimes three, who could do work in English that I was very proud of, and that too, when it was rigorously tested. The ability to write impromptu, to which they are trained, was such as to satisfy me, and I say to the boy, "That is good work ; you deserve to have that recognized on an admission to college ;" but it is not recognized ; it is scarce ever recognized. The past year twenty boys from my school took the Harvard examination. Four or five of them could write admirably ; I was personally entirely satisfied with the results of their training. They took honors enough in all other subjects. One of them, I believe, received eight credits in other subjects in which he hadn't been taught any better than in English, and I think not so well. He received no mark of credit, nothing to indicate that he had done good work in his school. But about the tenth or fifteenth boy of the class, who never in the world showed a spark of originality, who wrote only passably, and that always so, never by any accident wrote anything of positive excellence, received a credit. Well, if that were a solitary instance, I should think nothing of it ; but in my experience, that has been going on now for about fifteen years, and it seems to me there must be something wrong somewhere.

Apparently it is not simply that there is a higher standard in English. I don't object to that. I wish there might be something we could measure acquirement by. We shall very likely in this morning's session find out what the colleges want, or find out something about it. Up to the present time preparatory teachers can't find out. I attribute it largely to the faulty method of examination. Mr. Bradbury said that it is necessary to review these books rapidly, in order that the pupil may stand a good chance of recalling, on the topics that are put before him, or on some one of the topics, enough so that he can write an essay, for nobody

can write about a thing that he doesn't know anything about at all, or that he doesn't remember anything at all about; and he has said that that is killing interest and enjoyment in good literature. I want to confirm, by my personal experience, exactly that. When I read with my boys this book and that book, this poem and that poem, I enjoyed it, and they enjoyed it. It was all interesting and delightful. But when we came to cram on it for the final examination it was nauseating. And I was constantly afraid, and I *am* afraid that it will work strongly towards creating a dislike for literature. Now, let us put our heads together, and see if we cannot suggest something that the colleges will adopt that will promise better things.

DR. CECIL F. P. BANCROFT: I wish to add a few words to what Mr. Collar has said about the work in English in our schools. I am sure we are all very glad to have the subject discussed, and are very desirous that the colleges should be successful in dignifying the examination, so that it shall not be regarded as a mere form, but shall stand side by side with the other fundamental and substantial requirements for admission to college. The department is comparatively new, and though it has been accepted by the schools and by the community at large as being a very decided advance in the preparation of our students for college and university life, there has been some difficulty on the part of the schools in adjusting themselves to the new requirement; partly because they have not understood the purpose of the examination, and partly because the examination itself has been somewhat inconsistent. In our own case, as a very considerable number of our students go to Harvard, and a very large contingent to New Haven, and scattered delegations of smaller size to a great many other institutions, we, perhaps, have felt the embarrassment more than schools where the graduating class turns almost entirely towards a single institution. I do not know that I have followed the results of the examinations in our own schools with so much care as I ought; and yet I know how difficult it is for boys going to Cambridge to get distinction in English. Whether or not it is because the examiners are determined to create the impression that the examination in English is especially hard, I cannot tell. The fact that a good many boys go to college on a certificate in English, it seems to me, has worked some mischief in the instruction in some cases.

It is well known that a boy without reading the appointed books at all may secure by general intelligence and good fortune a passing mark at least ; and it is true that distinction sometimes comes, as Mr. Collar has told us, to boys who have been very lax in their industry and zeal, while the best boys get only a creditable mark. The thing will adjust itself, however, as we go on, especially if there can be secured a close agreement on the part of the colleges as to the books to be read and studied, and a general agreement as to the nature of the examination, its extent and method. A suggestion from this Association as to the method of examination would, I dare say, have very considerable weight in some influential quarters.

This leads me to another point, which is, it seems to me, of very great moment to many of us. We have been struggling ever since 1870, and more particularly since this Association was created, to bring, so far as we had a voice in the matter, uniformity and conformity out of chaos in the requirements of various institutions,—the upper schools, colleges and universities,—and we have been succeeding on the whole. The colleges have helped us, so that the various examinations to-day, as I have had occasion to say to this Association once before with considerable emphasis, are much more easily met by schools like ours, and the results are much more satisfactory. The examination papers set are better, and the care in estimating the candidates' work is much more noticeable and gratifying than formerly. For many years we have lamented that Yale University had no English requirement for admission, while the other institutions in the New England Association set a paper and agreed upon a common list of authors and works to be studied. I am very glad that the University here, whose guests we are, and which we ought not, perhaps, to criticise in our remarks, has at last set a paper in English, and English is now a recognized department in preparation for entrance to the Freshman class of Yale. This is a very great advance. However, it is a hardship, and an occasion of deep regret, that the books prescribed as the basis of the Yale examination are different from those adopted by the other colleges in the Association of New England Colleges. This is a distinct movement away from uniformity, and imposes extra work or duplicate work on many schools. It introduces a new element, a distracting one ; it is burdensome ; it is unfortunate ; and I should like

to inquire if our Committee of Conference has received any response whatever to the suggestions which they made at the last meeting on our behalf with respect to the uniformity of the English requirement in all the colleges of the New England Association. If so, I should like to hear from Mr. Bradbury what light and encouragement he can bring to us on that one point.

MR. BRADBURY: That special department was in the care, I believe, of Mr. Peck of Providence. I do not know whether he has had any response at all; there is nothing in the report that we have from the Committee that answers that question. I would like to ask Mr. Peck if he received any response from anything he has said?

MR. PECK. *Mr. President*: All communications between the Committee and the Commission pass through the chairman of the Committee. We have heard the letter from the secretary of the Commission read. In that he makes no reply to the matter that was presented. I suppose, however, as a matter of mere opinion, that, in the nature of the case, no reply could be received at this time. Of course the Commission could not act upon the matter without conferring in some way with their sub-committees, and it would take at least till another meeting before we could hear their response. What we hear from the Commission is what they did at that very meeting, and the recommendations made then we have before us. Certainly all the recommendations and reports would come only to the chairman of the Committee.

THE CHAIR. The Chair understood, from the first report that Mr. Bradbury read, that the sub-committee of the Commission was appointed to deliberate on that very question. Is the Chair mistaken?

MR. BRADBURY. I think so.

PROFESSOR THOMAS D. SEYMOUR: In the absence of my colleagues of the English department, I should like to state my understanding of the position of Yale as regards the examination in English for admission to college. As I understand the matter, our English department is entirely opposed to Mr. Bradbury's

notion of what such an examination should be. The examination in English was adopted by Yale with the distinct understanding that it should not be a mere test of ability to write an essay, but that it should be an examination on the works studied. Our English professors do not insist upon the particular works that shall be read ; they are perfectly willing, I am informed, that the works suggested by the Commission of New England Colleges should be read, instead of those which are named in our own catalogue ; but they claim the right to conduct the examinations according to their own methods, in order to secure not an essay, but definite knowledge of the work read. The gentlemen of our English department agree entirely with Mr. Bradbury that the number of works suggested by the Commission is more than can be covered by the schools in the way in which we desire those books to be read ; and this was one reason, among others, why other works were suggested by us. Not only did the instructors in English think that these other works would be better for their purposes, but they thought also that, by the reading of different books from those used for the other purpose, the sort of study which they desired could be most readily secured. They make no objection, however,—and that is the point I rise to make here,—to the use by preparatory schools of the books suggested by the Commission and required by other New England colleges.

MR. GEORGE L. FOX : The announcement just made by Professor Seymour I am sure will be a welcome one to many here ; not that I have any personal reason for complaint. Practically all of my boys go to Yale University ; but I am well aware of the great hardship that has been put upon other preparatory schools, in being required to read two sets of authors in English at the same time. It is a very great hardship, and I am very glad to hear it announced here, and to know that it will be stated in the most positive manner in the catalogue, that the same books will be examined upon, for admission to Yale, as are prescribed by the Commission of New England Colleges. I feel myself personally, and I have stated also to the professors in English in the University, my objection to certain portions of the Yale requirement, but I need not bring that up here ; I am glad to express my great satisfaction in the announcement that the same books may be offered as are offered at other colleges. I understand, from

what Professor Seymour says, that they will not be examined upon all of the books that are prescribed for each year. If I understand him aright, they have thought that the number determined upon for each year by the other colleges was larger than they wished to insist upon, for the reason that they wished more thorough work and more thorough examinations in the subject-matter of the books ; I should feel myself a considerable sympathy and agreement with that idea, as compared with the method of requiring an essay upon the subject-matter,—say, possibly, upon a single unimportant feature of the book which may have escaped the memory of a scholar. I think, with an examination of that sort, the scholar has some solid basis upon which to build his work. The only objection that I know of to such an examination is one sometimes heard, viz., that it "takes the bloom off the peach ;" that is, that the study will become nauseating. But, I think, if some course can be recommended by which the "demolition grind," and the hasty review of a large number of books, can be avoided in the last year, that objection to the examination in English loses weight. I do not sympathize with that myself, but I wish merely to say individually that I am extremely glad that Yale University is ready to accept the books required by the other colleges. I have always felt, with regard to that requirement, a great regret that Shakespeare was omitted ; it seems to me he was the last author to be omitted from such a requirement ; and I understand now they will accept the one or two plays of Shakespeare which are recommended each year in the other examinations.

MR. CHARLES S. KNOX : Professor Seymour's remarks seem to me quite to tally with the paper recently set for entrance examinations by Yale, which was noticeable in asking for the subject-matter or substance of thought in the books a little more minutely than the topics set for essays in the Harvard examinations are wont to do. It has pleased me to have the line between emphasis upon the study of literature *per se* and emphasis upon composition, as practice in expression, brought out into clearer light, as I should have liked yesterday to see it in connection with the aims and reasons of Latin study. We study Latin somewhat for itself and somewhat as a basis for learning English and French ; but English, the vernacular, should always be ac-

knowledged the chief instrument and middle point of education, with all study of foreign tongues subsidiary and contributory to it. If in foreign tongues we both study masterpieces for the sake of content and form, and practice composition for the sake of improving expression, naturally we shall do both of these in the mother-tongue. But with what degree of emphasis upon the one and the other shall we get our best results?

It may not be known to all here that a proposal was made in 1890 to a similar body to this, the College Association of the Middle States, by Professor Francis A. March of Lafayette College, that small fixed portions of two or three English classics should be adopted by all the colleges as permanent subjects of examination. He suggests Two books of Paradise Lost and Franklin's Autobiography as such texts, to be upon the same footing in the schools as the Iliad and Anabasis for Greek, and the Aeneid and Caesar's Gallic War for the Latin. He would have these books minutely and critically studied. I fear such a suggestion in New England now would be much ridiculed—so deep under the snow the old idea of slow and careful language study, connected often with the name of Dr. Taylor of Andover, seems to lie buried. Yet it may come back to us in some measure again.

It seems to me a good thing, with the young, to set a small definite amount of an author to be very carefully prepared with examination questions in view requiring thorough knowledge and exact thought, and then also to read larger portions rapidly and sympathetically, out of which topics may be selected of wider reach, with perhaps a little more of literary flavor in them. Thus by the first method the mind is kept longer in contact with the best work of men of genius and power of expression is gained by practicing composition with the great models fresh and strong in the memory; and out of the second in the case of foreign tongues comes at last our so-called "sight reading." And this principle applies to all study of all languages.

As for the higher side of Literature—Taste and the Aesthetic—many believe that it can not be scientifically taught and can not be examined upon. I have no wish especially to emphasize it. I remember reading of a boy who was trying to answer a literary question upon his paper and quite honestly wrote, "But, observe the awful uncertainty of it." The vagueness of tastes and feelings developed into a mist at once.

Whether the plan of keeping school papers upon the set pieces of literature and sending them to the colleges for side help in the entrance examinations can be brought into realization is an interesting question—also whether the colleges would be willing to accept note books of this kind without prescribing in some measure the topics upon which the boys are to write. If the colleges consent, it would perhaps save the schools from occasional danger of feeding upon our fine classics to the point of surfeit and nausea, though I think that this peril is sometimes overrated. Cramming in any subject is nauseating,—possibly more painfully so in literature than in science. I ought to add, perhaps, that Professor March's plan was referred to a committee and I believe is still in the committee's hands.

MR. A. L. GOODRICH: I wish, in some way, such a report as this might be given to us in such form that we could have a little time to think it over. I, for one, and I am sure one or two others who sit near me, do not feel ready to vote on such a recommendation as that. We haven't had the advantage that Mr. Bradbury and Mr. Collar have had of thinking it over. It comes with something of a surprise to me, and I cannot vote intelligently on the question this morning. If, in some way, such a recommendation could be put into our hands so that we could think it over in all its bearings, it would be much more satisfactory. I am not ready to vote on that question this morning. I feel very keenly the trouble that has been suggested. I also feel very keenly what has been suggested by the gentleman on my left who spoke a moment ago, that literature is being left out entirely in such examinations as we are forced to prepare for at Harvard, and the mere technique of writing, if I may so call it, is that which is emphasized. It seems to me that that portion, if possible, ought to be relegated to the schools entirely; in the same way that we are advised, for instance, to relegate arithmetic to the grammar schools, and not have anything to do with it except as a tool. The literature part I should very much desire to see emphasized more. Whether this plan will do it or not I am not prepared to say, and that is one reason why I feel very incompetent to vote on such a question this morning. I wish that such important recommendations as this might come before us in such a way that we might have time to consider them; for, it seems to me, if we

are to make a recommendation which is to come before this Commission, it ought to be one that is made with thought and care and not in haste, in order that it may carry weight.

MR. WILLIAM C. COLLAR: It seems to me that Mr. Goodrich's remarks are very wise, and to carry out his suggestion, I move that Mr. Bradbury's scheme be printed and copies be sent to the members of the Association, with notice that the Association will be asked to vote upon the matter at the next meeting.

MR. GOODRICH: May I add one suggestion in the way of amendment: that the Executive Committee be instructed, if it seem wise in their opinion, to bring the matter up as a part of the program of the next meeting. I recognize the fact that circumstances may change during the year, and it may not seem desirable to bring it forward in the program next year; but, if the Committee see fit, I move that they have the power to do so.

THE CHAIR: It is moved and seconded that the plan of examination presented by the Committee to Confer be printed and distributed by the secretary to the members of the Association, it being understood that that be done rather early in the year; and that the Executive Committee be requested to consider the expediency of making this general subject a feature of the program for the next year.

It was so voted.

MR. WILLIAM GALLAGHER: I am sure that every member of the Association has been delighted with the very kindly and cordial reception we have received here from Yale University, and I desire to express the thanks of the Association, and have the expression recorded in the minutes:

Resolved, That the members of the Association desire to put on record their appreciation of the hospitality with which they have been entertained by Yale University, and do hereby extend to the corporation their thanks for the use of Dwight Hall for their meetings, for the generous entertainment provided at Alumni Hall and at the social reception, for the opportunity of examining the buildings connected with the University, and also to the members of the Glee and Banjo Clubs for their delightful contributions to the success of the evening gathering.

This resolution was adopted.

MR. M. GRANT DANIELL: In view of the interest which was shown yesterday afternoon in the discussion, and in view of what seems to be a general feeling of the Association, I beg leave to offer the following vote: That the Committee appointed to confer with the Commission of Colleges be instructed to present to the Commission the subject of a wider range of choice in the Latin authors and works required for admission to college.

THE CHAIR: The Chair would like to inquire, for the information of the members, whether that was done at the last conference with the Commission.

MR. BRADBURY: I don't think anything was said upon that point especially.

MR. DANIELL: My thought was simply that this matter as presented yesterday ought to come officially before the Commission of Colleges through the Committee of this body, without limiting it closely.

THE CHAIR: That discretion be left to the Committee as to the method of presentation?

MR. DANIELL: Certainly.

THE CHAIR: The Chair understands that the language of the motion does not imply a recommendation to the Commission of a wider range, but that the method of presentation should be left to the discretion of the Committee.

It was so voted.

SHORT RECESS.

The Chair introduces Assistant Professor Barrett Wendell, of Harvard University, to speak on English Work in the Secondary Schools.

MR. WENDELL: *Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:* When your Secretary invited me to speak to you concerning English in the Secondary Schools, I told him that while such an invitation was a professional summons which I could not honorably fail to answer,

my knowledge of the subject in question was very slight. I could not hope, then, to say much which should be of value to a company professionally familiar with the schools in question. My own experience of thirteen years as a teacher of English has been wholly in Harvard College. There my position has been, as it remains, subordinate; and my official superiors have never thought proper to direct me to concern myself with the entrance examination, while only for a single year, now some time past, have they given into my charge a Freshman Class. My experience, then, has been almost invariably with the three upper classes of undergraduates. My knowledge of Secondary Schools is derived only from such fragmentary reading and observation as may be expected from any educated man.

In spite of this representation, your Secretary kindly persisted in his invitation that I address you. In so doing it seems to me that I may best deal with the subject very generally. For I find that while anything I might say of precise methods would inevitably lack the indispensable confirmation of practical experiment, I can state with an approach to conviction three general opinions. These are first, what I conceive to be the distinguishing trait of the study of English, the trait which marks it apart from other subjects both in schools and in colleges; secondly, what seems to me the chief difficulties which beset students of English in the earlier stages of their careers; and thirdly, what I believe to be the most insidious and constant dangers of their teachers.

First, then, for the distinguishing trait of the study of English.

We may assume, I think, that whatever the end of a schoolboy's education, whether he be bound for college, for a technical school, or for immediate contact with the business of life, the function and the nature of his studies in English should remain constant. We may assume that any plans which devise one system of teaching English for one purpose and a different system for another are archaically mistaken, except of course so far as they are due to such inevitable exigencies as the increased demands on time of classics in an academic course, of physics or mathematics in a scientific. Even then, any system of instruction which should vary the teaching of English in kind, as distinguished from varying it in quantity, we may assume to be mistaken.

For whatever the end of a boy's training, or a girl's either, for that matter,—I use the masculine form only for convenience,—the study of a mother tongue must have in that training a place peculiarly, distinctly its own. The study of the classics, of mathematics, of any science or practical art, even of book-keeping or trades, is inherently bound, the further it proceeds, to increase in technicality, in specialization. The advanced student or the skilful workman is, and ought to be, constantly more and remote from the every-day, untutored man, like you or me, whom for the moment we will assume to be not his fellow-specialists. In a phrase, we may say that the essence of excellence in general scholarship is knowing things that other people do not know. In broad contrast to this, the essence of excellence in such scholarship as should result from the intelligent study of English is knowing things that other people do know.

Obviously true of the study of English composition, a term under which I venture to include etymology, grammar, rhetoric, and so on, this perhaps catch-penny phrase is really just as true of the study of English literature. For the intelligent study of that literature—of the lasting expressions of the meaning of life which have been phrased in our mother-tongue—results not in mechanically memorized lists of names and dates and other dead or dying facts; but in a sympathetic understanding of the ancestral experience of our own race, that experience which in the vital form of natural heredity still animates the living world of which we, in our own passing New England, form a momentarily conscious part. Whether they actually know the facts of English literature or not, the every-day human beings about us are still instinct with its spirit. The ripest student of that literature, old or young, is he who best appreciates his fellow-men.

With English composition, in its broadest sense, the trait which I have in mind is far more obvious. The task of the writer is to inform other people of what he knows or feels. Very clearly, to do this he must always be sympathetically considerate of the public he addresses, large or small. Very clearly, too, the wider this sympathetic appreciation of the living people all about him, the greater his power of informing, influencing, stirring, pleasing them. There is no more pregnant commonplace in the books of rhetoric than perhaps the oldest. The ultimate secret of the art these books try to teach, in its very highest forms, is learned by

those who think the thoughts of the wise, and who speak the language of the simple.

In truth, then, what distinguishes the study of English, in our English-speaking country, from all other studies is this: while other studies tend towards various kinds of special culture and training, more and more remote from actual life, the study of English tends, or surely should tend, rather towards a broad, general culture and training, whose ultimate result should be the closest and most sympathetic appreciation of the very world we live in. In this trait, I think, and in the implied consequences of it, lies the real secret of the importance which in a blind sort of way has of late years been attached to the study. Other studies, people begin to recognize, draw the student further and further away from every-day life; the study of his native language brings him constantly nearer and nearer to it. The deepest, most important function of the study, then, is to bind the student, with strengthening bonds, to the living world from which his other work is constantly distracting him. Here, and here only, specialist and layman may always fraternize in the growing consciousness of common humanity.

An easy enough task this would seem for any pupil, and a pleasant, too. It amounts, you see, to this: in the midst of a necessarily complicated, puzzling, abstract process of education, there remains at least this one kind of study whose object should be constantly to remind whoever pursues it that he is after all living in a world full of people as human as himself, whose result should be the gratifying power of communicating with them in an intelligibly agreeable way. Yet somehow, the study of English at this moment is beyond question irksome, dull, and fruitless. I have proposed to enquire, in a general way, why this state of things exists, first in the case of pupils, and then in the case of teachers.

Broadly speaking, I conceive the trouble to be that nowadays neither pupils nor teachers generally understand the real nature of the study in question; and so that one and all work blindly in the dark, industriously wasting a great deal of time which they perfectly realize, even if they do not admit it, might be much more profitably employed. But the form of human perversity which induces this state of mind in pupils so differs from that which

induces it in teachers, that we may to advantage consider the two kinds of difficulty separately.

Thus I come to the second question which I proposed in the beginning,—the chief difficulties which I believe to beset pupils of English in Secondary Schools.

In any respectable course of primary education, I suppose, a pupil may be assumed to have acquired that broad sort of elementary education which must lie at the base of all, and which nowadays we take for granted that everybody, whatever his social grade, possesses. We may assume, I suppose, that the graduate of a primary school can read and write tolerably, and add and subtract and multiply and divide, that he knows which hemisphere he lives in, that he is aware that the United States are a republic, and so on. What he knows, in short, is what everybody knows. In dealing with other people he is beautifully free from the problem which arises when he finds himself in later life possessed of information not necessarily in possession of everybody else.

So much we may assume. More than this we may reasonably demand, too : namely, that so far as their training in English is concerned the graduates of primary schools shall have been taught to read and to write with elementary accuracy. I should have been less certain that we might reasonably demand this unhappily exceptional state of things, had I not lately seen a demonstration of its accomplishment with a class of pupils whom one would not presume promising. A few weeks ago I happened to be shown a set of forty or fifty one-page letters, written by boys who had been committed, for offences at least as grave as stealing, to a reform school. These boys came there, I understand and hope, with hardly any education at all. They had been put through a system of training so mechanical that my eye, by no means inexperienced with manuscript, could detect little visible difference between any two of the hand-writings. But in the cursory examination for which I had time, I could not detect a single error either in spelling, in punctuation, or general epistolary form. Of course, there must have been such errors lurking somewhere ; but they were distinctly less obvious than in any equal amount of similar writing from Harvard freshmen. The letters lacked individuality, to be sure ; they did not lack formal

correctness. I see no reason why we should not demand from schools which undertake the primary training of blameless youth, a result that can demonstrably be attained in the primary training of habitual criminals.

Primary training, however, concerns us now only so far as we must assume it in our special consideration of secondary training. With such elementary education as I have suggested, and with more or less approach to the elementary accuracy which I have described, pupils come to secondary schools, there to proceed toward learning of higher degree,—to prepare for college, for a scientific school, for the active business of mature life. From the very beginning of this secondary education, whatever its end, it differs in kind from the primary. Whatever the pupil studies, he learns more things and more, which people in general do not know,—Latin Grammar or French, Algebra, Music, Mechanics, Book-keeping; it matters not what. The first difficulty that besets him in the study of English was brought very concretely to my notice within a fortnight.

A boy of about thirteen, admitted in a reputable preparatory school to a class which should be ready to enter Harvard College in the autumn of 1897, came to me with the *Autobiography of Franklin*, which he had been instructed to read. What should he do with it, was his question. Read it, I told him, understand it, enjoy it; I had found it interesting even at his time of life. That was not his task with it, he explained; he had been directed to study it at school, as part of his preparation for college. To make a long story short, the teacher was not a bit to blame; he had meant the boy to do much what I advised him to do. But the boy himself was already so impregnated with the technical, mysterious, specializing spirit which must inevitably permeate any system of secondary education, that he found unfeigned difficulty in grasping the idea that anything which he had to study could possibly be dealt with as an unaffectedly human document. He was honestly bewildered by the normal simplicity of his task.

This instinctive belief, confirmed by every other kind of studious experience, that all serious study must inherently tend toward isolated specialization, seems to me the first difficulty that besets earnest pupils who make a mess of their English in secondary schools. Clearly enough, a really intelligent teacher

can explain it away. The process may involve vexatiously tedious reiteration of good sense ; but such reiteration ought to do the business.

With the second difficulty the case is not so simple. This presents a far more puzzling problem ; it demands, to be overcome, not only constant, exhausting instruction from a competent teacher, but a great deal of hard mental work on the part of the pupil. For want of actual experience I cannot state this second difficulty so concretely as I stated the first. I shall venture, however, to state it with equal confidence.

What first defined it in my mind was a general impression that children as a rule express themselves better than youths. Without breach of confidence I may perhaps add that when I once glanced through several sets of compositions written by different classes in a secondary school which is rightly reputed among our best, I found this impression confirmed by the fact—at first surprising—that the boys in the lower forms appeared to write on the whole better than the boys in the upper ; and this in spite of very careful attention to the subject of English Composition.

No great thought was enough to show an adequate cause for this state of things, in the essential nature of the secondary education through which these boys were passing. As we have seen, this education is, and ought to be, increasingly special. In primary schools, as children, pupils learn only what everybody knows. When it comes to writing, their business is only to phrase intelligibly what people understand anyway. In secondary schools, in the period between childhood and maturity, pupils are constantly acquiring, almost day by day, bewildering masses of special, technical information which in the nature of things can be thoroughly understood only by highly educated specialists. When it comes to writing, their business is actually to expound. For even painfully educated people forget very quickly what they do not have to remember. To cite a case in point I devoted several hours a week for eight consecutive years to the study of Greek Grammar, of which I retain to-day no more fruitful memory than that there are two aorists and a mood called optative : what these are, what they look like, what they mean, I have not the ghost of a recollection. Only from their etymology can I now derive any vestige of an idea about them. Yet I studied them faithfully for eight years, and eighteen years ago, I honestly

earned one mark of nearly ninety per cent. in Greek. This case I conceive to be typical. Secondary education involves the incessant, accumulative acquisition of information that ordinary people, even such as pass for educated, do not understand.

In the nature of things, this rapidly accumulated information cannot be very thoroughly digested. It can easily be recited though, by a mental process painfully analogous to the regurgitations of infancy. Thereupon, it can instantly be replaced by fresh information, whose fate shall be similar. Too often, perhaps inevitably, this is what happens. Brains, like stomachs, we are prone despairingly to leave in the hands of Providence. If we had had the making of them, we might have introduced mechanical improvements; as we had not, we can only deal with them as we may. The result of this treatment is prevalent, chronic mental dyspepsia.

Perhaps this state of things is unavoidable. Certainly no one without wide experience of actual facts, as distinguished from the superficial phenomena, should presume to assert that it can be avoided. If it can be, though, it really ought to be. To state the fact literally, the trouble is that as the pupil in secondary schools advances in his special lines of work, he becomes rapidly possessed of an increasing stock of half-digested technical facts. These he can without much trouble so express that his account shall be roughly intelligible to a special teacher, whose business is chiefly to make sure that the pupil has some sort of knowledge of them. But what to do with them in the presence of anybody but the special teachers is a question which the pupil has hardly ever faced. As a rule he has never considered what he has learned, or is learning, in such relation to actual life as would be involved in an attempt to explain it intelligibly to a layman.

What training in expression he has had, in fact,—and sometimes he has had more than you would suppose from the results,—seems generally to have been so separated from his laborious acquisitions in other fields, that as we have seen he instinctively regards his study of English as a thing apart from his other studies, just as each and all of them are apart from the every-day business of life. The fruit of this process of culture was collected in a document, probably familiar to many of you—I mean the elaborate report on English Composition submitted by Mr. Charles Francis Adams to the Overseers of Harvard College.

The rhetorical infirmities displayed in the writings therein collected need not be discussed here. They are pretty clearly due to the facts that I have just suggested. The boys who wrote these papers had had their heads crammed with things which they had never been made to consider possible subjects for simple human expression ; and what training in expression they had had, they had regarded not as a thing which should be made habitual, but as another bit of special information. In view of these facts, the writings in question possess two unexpectedly promising traits.

In the first place, while often confused in arrangement and phrase, they are hardly ever obscure—if you are not deliberately perverse, you can almost always see about what a boy meant. In the second place, they are frankly unaffected, in refreshing contrast to many older fashioned school compositions, which on purely technical grounds are unquestionably better.

The problem really before a modern school-boy, then, assumes a fairly definite shape : it is, if such a thing be possible, habitually to apply his unaffected good sense to the task of so expressing whatever he knows or acquires, that people of ordinary learning can pleasurabley understand him. If he can be made to face this problem, if expression can be made a habit that shall keep anything like pace with acquisition, he can learn to write well ; and whosoever has learned to write well has learned to read sympathetically.

So we come to the last question I have proposed to touch : namely, what are the most insidious and constant dangers of people who teach English.

Very clearly, pupils in such a plight as we have been considering can not help themselves much, without good instruction. Very clearly, in spite of incalculably honest and devoted attempts to instruct, they are not as a rule quite competently instructed. This is for no want of good will on the part of teachers ; we must look for its cause, I think, to certain difficulties inherent in the teacher's position.

It were tedious to repeat that the first, and most obvious, is an imperfect understanding on the part of most teachers of English that their chief duty is mediatory—that their real business is to keep the growing knowledge of their pupils in the closest possible relation with actual life. If they are dealing with literature, the one thing which above all others they should make pupils feel, is

that this literature is a lasting record of what real, human experience has meant to real men and women who have thought and spoken in the very language we use ourselves. If they are dealing with composition, the one thing which above all others they should make their pupils feel, is that whatever a man knows he should be able to make intelligible to every day human beings—D. V., without boring them. Granting, what I fear is not to be taken for granted, that a teacher fully understands this, he has still to face two serious difficulties inherent in his situation.

The first I have touched on already. In the rapidly developing condition of special learning nowadays, a great many teachers—even in secondary schools—must find themselves in a position unavoidable in colleges or universities. They must constantly be confronted with pupils whose knowledge of certain subjects actually surpasses their own. A boy prepared for Harvard College, for example, is generally expected to have some knowledge, at least, of Latin, Greek, French, German, Mathematics, Physics, and History—Ancient and Modern. What, he knows, too, he must know pretty accurately. It will never do for him to forget the subtleties of datives and subjectives, optatives and aorists, to confine his mathematical operations to elementary arithmetic, or to be in doubt whether Pericles and Themistocles were contemporary or not. On the other hand, teachers of English, as such, are less infected with human frailty than most of us, if they can at once keep in touch with life and preserve constantly at their disposal even so little special knowledge as all this. The very fact that in certain directions their pupils are for the moment more learned than they, is bound to bother them. If this fact actually exists, there are only two ways to meet it : either the teacher must deliberately disconnect his teaching from those dangerous subjects of which pupils may know more than he ; or he must do in school what we have done for years at Harvard College—utilize his own comparative ignorance as a frank test of the pupil's power of expression ; for after all what the pupils really need is power to communicate agreeably and intelligibly to an unlearned world the facts and truths of which study is possessing them. Certainly in college teaching there are few methods which have proved more fruitful than this humble one. We say to pupils again and again, “ You know more of this or that than I do. I want to know more. Tell me clearly, and mind that you don't bore me in the telling.”

Then, if we do not understand, or if we are bored, we put in our critical work, sometimes with good effect. Whatever the final result, we are in the nature of things far more experienced technical critics than even our most learned pupils have had time to become. In most cases the respect commanded by our assured criticism ultimately does away with the contempt to which a self-conscious teacher might fear that our comparative ignorance, frankly confessed, would expose us.

This first difficulty of teachers, though,—this comparative ignorance of what pupils know—is not the most serious. After all, it is chiefly a question of obviously false pride. It is neither subtle nor fascinating. The second difficulty is both.

In the present state of specialized and constantly more highly specializing learning, the learned world agrees with the vulgar in attaching unlimited importance to things it does not understand. In all seriousness, for example, I doubt if there is a living chemist who does not feel a kind of humiliation in the presence of an acknowledged master of Indo-Iranian languages. He is uncomfortably aware that, in certain matters, this man knows a great deal more than he does. The Professor of Sanskrit unquestionably returns the compliment. Thus the learned world has insensibly developed into a system of technical guild mysteries, disposed in general to treat one another with formal respect and to mingle in common disdain of such humble folks as know only what other people can understand. If the poor teacher of English cannot shroud himself in some sort of mystery, he feels that he has no place in the world of learning.

Partly from this subtle temptation of the spirit of our time, partly from the inherent fascination of advanced, special work, there is a tendency among teachers of English, high and low, to make their work more and more technical, to lead their pupils further and further away from actual, every-day life, to forget their mediatory duties in the Capuan delights of scholarly seclusion. In a vulgar form, this tendency appears in the "diagrammed" sentences of second-rate modern grammars, of which reports came to us at Harvard chiefly from the more remote regions of the Mississippi Valley. In a more orthodox form, this tendency appears in the insistence so frequent everywhere that the general student of English, whether he can understand the human side of Shakespere or not, and whether or not he can write half a page

with correct amenity, must at least devote laborious hours to the study of Anglo-Saxon. In a higher form still, we can see it in the comparatively new systems now prevalent at some of the better Western colleges, where students of limited general culture are set to work counting the average number of words which a given author uses in a sentence, and depicting the results in elaborate systems of statistical curves. These hasty examples are enough. In its better forms such scholarship as this is laboriously respectable; it is impressive with all the cloudy dignity of any unshared knowledge; and so long as it is reserved for the few who are prepared for it, such scholarship can do no harm, and may lead to much good. If one who aspires to be a sane schoolmaster yields to its fascination, however, its results may be almost unmitigately mischievous. For pursued by itself, without regard for the living world about us, it can lead only to such lofty pedantic seclusion as already enshrouds so many other kinds of study.

In the cases of other subjects than English such seclusion is perhaps inevitable, and possibly favorable. In the case of English I conceive it to be needless and destructive. For, when all is said, if the considerations I have tried to keep before you are valid, then it follows that the best teacher of English is not the teacher whose technical scholarship is most impregnable; he is the teacher who, in the widest and broadest sense, is the best man of the world. And, if this be true, the best pupil of English is not the best grammarian or the best etymologist; he is the pupil who most sympathetically assimilates this broadly human temper.

From what I have said, certain practical suggestions might seem to follow.

For one thing, we might well doubt whether in an ideal system of general education there should usually be much special teaching of English at all, as distinguished from a constant effort on the part of all intelligent teachers—whatever their specialties—to train their pupils incessantly in the habit of generally intelligible statement of whatever special facts they are acquiring.

Again, it is pretty clear that in any event the study of technical English—of Anglo-Saxon, formal grammar, and so on—should be kept rigidly subordinate to sympathetic appreciation of literature and to constant habit of expression in speaking and writing.

Still more, it seems indubitable that every particle of the teaching

of English which fails constantly to keep in mind the intimate relation which must exist between human beings and the world they live in is insidiously mischievous.

In venturing these slight suggestions, however, I stray into regions where my inexperience makes what I say of doubtful pertinence. I must remind you once more that I speak, with no formal sanction from my official superiors, only in the character of a man who for thirteen years has been a subordinate teacher of English at Harvard. My effort has been clearly to state the general considerations which I believe that any teacher of English, special or not, should constantly keep in mind. The practical application of their principles must for the while remain a matter of intelligent, growingly experienced experiment.

THE CHAIR : The discussion of this subject will be opened by Mr. Samuel Thurber of Boston, Mass.

MR. SAMUEL THURBER : We owe special thanks to Professor Wendell for his clear and emphatic insistence on this difference between English teaching and all other teaching in secondary schools, that while other teaching is necessarily special, English teaching is always general. All persons, not professors of some department of English philology or literature, stand in the same relation to the results of training in English. Everybody speaks, writes, reads English ; and nobody has any peculiar or special call to speak or write better English, or to read more intelligently, than anybody else. It is usual to hear the English teacher spoken of as one especially owing loyalty to the professional *noblesse oblige*, as one from whom something dainty and immaculate in language may be expected. The English teacher is popularly supposed to know all the rules that all the purists have ever devised for speaking and writing, and never to slip in applying these rules to his own practice.

This attitude of the scholastic public towards the English teacher has manifold inconveniences. If he is of an inquiring turn of mind, he may well ask, in imitation of what writer he should use or recommend a spotless English. What writer, ancient or modern, recent or even contemporary, can he find, that practices all the rules he tries to apply to the correction of compositions ? English that is absolutely clear, abundantly strong, well

bred and urbane beyond criticism, shall yet vex his soul with lapses from his standard of formal correctness. He perceives words and phrases slowly but surely gaining currency in spite of him and all his guild. The teacher of Latin has no occasion to observe a weakening of respect for the subjunctive in the Latin authors. The teacher of chemistry has not to lament that the symbols are coming to be used promiscuously. But the teacher of English has ever to fret himself over such queries as : shall I go on perpetually displacing the adverb from its intrusive settlement in the midst of the infinitive, when my contemporaries are learning to tolerate this speech form with the fullest hospitality ; shall I continue to frown austere on every case of cross-breeding of *shall* and *will*, when the most conservative, and *a fortiori*, of course, all other, newspapers mingle them unpleasantly ; shall I find offence in the form, *before I am done*, when a distinguished Harvard professor uses it without detriment to his diction ; shall I unweariedly fume over unescorted participles while all the men and women who write to be understood allow their participles to go unescorted.

In truth, the English teacher who is nothing else, is pretty sure to become a much belated person. The rhetorics have loaded him with prohibitions, and he has grown accustomed to watch for transgressions rather than for excellences. All speech is to him *vile corpus*, good for his dissecting processes. No subject of science or politics or of current news is to him so interesting but he stumbles at the rhetorical sins in the accounts of it and loses his head and his temper while other people are getting interesting ideas and are enjoying the intellectual consolations of life. How often has it been my experience to have spoken to a pedagogic audience on some topic that I deemed important, and to find, when the question was opened for discussion, that I had before me the task of defending my pronunciation or my syntax instead of my thesis. Let an educator even of prime note address an audience of high school teachers, and he shall find he has impressed his hearers chiefly with his English, which perhaps has been so superb that, to those admiring listeners, it has conveyed no educational ideas.

Perhaps the mania for faultless expression is to prove a passing fashion. I certainly hope it is. For English, like a tree or a vine, may be overpruned,—pruned to the quick,—so that it seems to be

in better shape, but has really lost vigor. Overpruned English you may recognize as being bloodless, or, to use no figure, as being academic and schoolmasterly. When the English teacher has come to take pleasure in the very process of correction, and to estimate his thoroughness by the quantity of his loppings and trimmings, then his usefulness is at an end.

I am sure our secondary schools are going too far in their devotion to conventional correctness. This hypertrophy of the speech consciousness leads to much ill directed effort and to much waste of strength. When Mr. Adams prodded the educators with his report, they bethought themselves of giving more hours to the correction of compositions, or of the introduction of more text-books of rhetoric. Stimulated by a public demand for better training in English, educational leaders went about reconstructing their courses in the direction of subtracting from the attention and the time given to literature that they might add to the attention and the time given to the elaboration of themes. English is of course a very live subject; but herein it fell a victim to deadness and formalism, as it would have done ten years ago. More text-book, more red ink or blue pencil, more ineffable weariness, more estimating and marking, more *stupor paedagogicus*,—such must still be our resort, as if we were not in a *fin-de-siècle* world of change and improvement.

The college professor of English may elaborate his philosophy of the art of expression: but the secondary teacher, with his juvenile classes, only clogs utterance when he imposes his rules. The text-book of rhetoric has no proper place in secondary schools. The great fund of expression is the good literature that is all about us. On the habit of good reading must be founded all hope of acquiring the accomplishment of good writing. Therefore the English teacher must primarily study how to inculcate a relish for reading. A relish for writing,—a love of expression for its own sake,—he absolutely must not inculcate. A theme written with the purpose to show the writer's docility in learning rules or in submitting to criticism is a monstrous thing. The English teacher's art is in bringing his learner into such an attitude that the learner shall have in his mind something to express and a desire to express it. But this is, of course, equally the art of all other teachers.

Thus I come inevitably to my contention, that the special

English teacher, so far as concerns the speaking and writing of English, has no *raison d'être*. He has precisely the same business with expression that the other teachers have ; except, of course, that, as teacher of literature, he enters with his pupils the vast fields of expression and ranges with his classes among the very models and patterns and exemplars of good English.

The English of secondary schools is the English of gentlemen, and not an academic English, pruned to faultlessness. Every secondary teacher writes the English that is wanted in the school. It is absurd to speak of secondary school English as a mystery, to make it wise, to treat it as a specialty, to conceive it as the resultant of a myriad of rules, to coördinate which demands the skill of a peculiarly trained and gifted teacher. Great of course are tact, skill, shrewdness, craft, among the pedagogic accomplishments : but the school in which expression is to be made neat and pure must be the school in which *tone* is everything, and *tact* a virtue of inferior rank. The English of a school is an element of its *morale*. Cunning and subtlety and tact, resources of the inferior mind, cannot come near it. Tone is pervasive : all the teachers of a corps catch it, and radiate it in all school exercises. Here is the only hope of improving the English in the schools. It is of no use to apply the spur and make teacher and pupils work harder over text-books and compositions. If expression cannot in a school be made a matter of public spirit, equally engaging the attention of all, it may as well be abandoned as an object of school endeavor.

And as I may be using the word *tone* with special regard to certain of its connotations that do not instantly arise in the minds of my hearers, I will say that I conceive of (tone in a school as that spirit in its corps of teachers that binds them all together in single and loyal striving for the highest aims of education.) While each instructor has his specialty, whose boundaries all the others respect, the main concern of the school is not the aggregate of its specialties, but the pervading ambition that determines the temper of all its work and the rectitude and sincerity of its conscious purpose. When the trustees engage a teacher, they engage him to teach a particular subject ; but if they are wise, they choose this particular person because of his elevation of character, his capacity for self-devotion, his superiority to intrigue, his refinement of manner, his intolerance of all moral and intellectual baseness.

A high ideal in a teaching corps, honestly reinforced by each member of it, begets in pupils similar aims, and establishes in them that love of excellence which alone can be trusted as a motive in the training of expression, as of all the other accomplishments that especially concern the personal relations of the individual to his fellow-men.

Professor Wendell's citation of the reform school in which the boys had learned to manage their English so well, should serve as an eye-opener to all who listened to his paper. Those boys had been held to a strenuous discipline. They were filled with pride in their English. Under similar or corresponding educative processes the boys who wrote for Mr. Adams would have learned to do equally well; and in the same mood of honest self-respect would have written in good form and also with veracity when they reported on the instruction they had had in English. The secret of good English in school is strong discipline, sound *morale*, high tone. Tact merely varnishes the surface and produces a semblance of success, while ambitions remain untouched with zeal. If the English of a school or college is in an unsatisfactory state, then other things also in that school or college are in an unsatisfactory state. The pressure on all the pipes is the same, only it is registered most conspicuously on the English gauge. Unsoundness that you barely surmise or suspect in the foreign language or the scientific class rooms, becomes glaring in the English lessons and attracts the attention even of laymen and of an interested public. Fortunately for the interests of education, there are some departments of it in which tact cannot pull down the window curtains to balk outside curiosity. A school that professes to make steam engines and sell them for actual use, must learn to do good work and to do it unfailingly, for immediate and remorseless examination. The mechanic arts school is one that the public can and will inspect directly, needing no mediation of professional supervisors. So the school that undertakes to train youth in English expression produces a commodity that is perfectly comprehensible to the world of newspaper writers and newspaper readers, that can be criticized in every household, and that will legitimately be accepted as the crucial test of the school's moral and intellectual vitality.

I make bold to say that the English teacher, however vigorous his personality, and however earnest his purpose, works in vain

in a school where he is surrounded by half-heartedness and general feebleness of tone. I asked a pupil whose English was very bad indeed, how such faults as she committed had been dealt with in the school from which she had come. She had an impression that her attention had been called to them. Only your child of grace thrives under a regimen of mild calling of his attention to his faults. The ways of business are rude and merciless. The merchant, the overseer, the employer of service, the purchaser of mechanical productions, are not given to glozing,—they possess absolutely no tact. Of late the business world has begun to talk unpleasantly about our English. English is the only really exposed side of our works. But if the business world finds unsoundness here, it is because the whole structure is unsound ; and all attempts to make local repairs are surely destined to fail.

THE CHAIR. The Chair respectfully submits that the Executive Committee has done its work well in inviting the two gentlemen to whom you have listened to prepare the essay and open the discussion. It now remains for the members of the Association to support the Executive Committee by entering into a lively discussion. There are many teachers of English present, and the subject is now thrown open.

MISS ANNA BOYNTON THOMPSON: As I listened to the discussion this morning I became discouraged ; for I was made to feel that my view of the way in which English ought to be taught was wholly individual, and therefore wholly wrong, but as I listened to Mr. Wendell I found it all again, so I take courage to speak.

I understood Mr. Wendell to say that the essence of the study of literature is sympathetic knowledge of the ancestral experience of the race, and that the crown of the study of literature is ability to understand the present.

It seems to me that the nature of the present examinations in English is such as to disintegrate the wholeness of life, to establish divisions where nature had established only connections. To pick up an author here and there, or worse still, one of his works, and study either as an isolated fact, seems to me highly unphilosophical. It is impossible to understand our author if we do so, to grasp his significance, and measure his real value, for he is both

product and cause of the age in which he lives, and the watching of the action and the reaction of the man and his environment is one of the most instructive aspects of the study of Literature : he is a member of an organic whole, and to look at him as a detached phenomenon is as illogical as to study the member of any organism without considering its relations to the whole. Relations are the essence of any truth, the real being of whatever is : if we have a fact without its relations we have no fact, but falsehood, or rather we have nothing at all, for it is a commonplace of Philosophy that nothing exists except as a part of that great complex of relations which life proves itself to be.

Therefore my first care in studying an author is to set him in his proper relations. I tell my boys and girls that now we are going to study one period in the life of England, that it is a definite and organic life as is the life of an individual, that it has as many contemporary expressions as does the life of an individual, but that it is always One and the Same Life manifesting itself. Just as each pupil has a side for class organization, athletic matches, society, church, study, but is an identical personality displaying itself in these different sides, so the One Soul, the One Will, the One Mind, the great Organic Being of the Nation manifests itself in Politics, War, Social order, Religious organization, Literature, etc., and it is impossible to understand any one of these sides alone. We must grasp the Whole and then view each special activity as a more or less complete manifestation of the Whole, if we are to seize its real value.

First, then, we study briefly the political and social life of the nation in the given period, and try to catch its meaning, to see just what the World Spirit is revealing to man at this epoch, to grasp what this age stands for in the unfolding of the world's order.

Then we look at its literary activity and seek there the same spirit, we hold side by side political, social, literary life and listen to them deliver the same message.

Next comes the life of the author ; for we must learn to distinguish how far temperament and the accidents of fortune count in what he presents to us, how much in his work is purely individual and how much is the spirit of the age using him as mouthpiece.

We are now ready to study the special work that the colleges direct. This work we view continually in the light of the whole ; we trace causal connection running into and from it ; we see that

its matter is what it is because the interests of the age are what they are, and its manner because the feeling of the times is pitched upon a certain key ; we look beyond it to see why it is and what it is, and again beyond it for the influence which it exerts ; we see the Whole in it and it in the Whole ; it is a part of a living organism and our task is to find just what part. Of course we look at it from many other points of view—as basis for study of Rhetoric, cultivation of taste, formation of style, but all these are set as detail within an inclusive whole.

This kind of work seems to me necessary if we are to study an author intelligently, but it all counts for nothing in the entrance examinations. These examinations are of such nature that a bright pupil with cultivated home where good English is spoken and written, can prepare for them with two weeks' unaided cram. It is done repeatedly by those who wish to hurry through their preparatory work. They obtain permission to take two years of Greek and Latin in one at school, and work up their History and Literature at home in the short vacations. With such preparation they pass the entrance examinations triumphantly.

Now the fault lies, it seems to me, in the examinations that permit such passing. Ought not the questions put to demand such breadth of knowledge as shall require the study of English to be a serious feature in the preparatory course, and not the one thing that it is safe to shirk ? If, in addition to their present requirements they should demand historical knowledge of the epoch treated, general knowledge of its literary men, and knowledge of the life of the special author studied, our pupils would not dare to neglect them.

The second point concerns the organization of the work of composition within the preparatory school. First, may I give an example of what I mean. Eliot Shaw Land was a boy whom most careful instruction in English could not help in theme-writing ; but the practice of bringing in daily written translation from Homer enabled him to pass the Harvard English examination without condition.

Such experience, spread over a long course of years, has convinced me that one of the best methods of teaching English composition is by written translation, and it seems to me that if the teachers of Greek, Latin, French, and German were jointly responsible for the excellence of English composition, our secondary schools would be greatly benefited.

Another means which I have found of great service towards the desired end, is requiring my Seniors to bring in every week written discussions of some problem connected with their lesson in Political Economy. Here we insist upon absolute clearness and conciseness ; logical order is our aim and anything in excess or in deficiency of logical order is condemned. We are thus enabled to demand close thinking and exact expression, two essentials which it is almost impossible to get through literary work alone, for Literature allows loose, vague treatment when sentiment and grace may cover a multitude of sins against consistent thought.

The third point relates to the content of our themes. Before the pupils can write well they must have something to say. Poverty of thought, absence of knowledge and idea, is at present their greatest obstacle. To say nothing clearly and simply, is fatal to literary effect; it seems more fitting not to say it at all. Our first effort, then, must be directed towards showing them where to find material, and here it seems to me that the teacher of English has a superior opportunity to grasp the minds of her pupils and to shape the content of them at will. Let her require short daily themes and she exercises control over the conscious thought of every day ; the children seek material and she shows them where to find it ; if she is wise she teaches them to see in daily life abundant stuff for interesting expression where there is the power of expression, to find, if not "joy in widest commonalty" spread, at least interest. Some of the themes must be narrative, must tell something which has happened personally to the writer on the day of writing ; their statement must be simple, specific, to the point ; all vaporizing must be rigorously suppressed. But they must also learn to transcend their petty, personal selves and live in the larger life of public interests ; they must wake to a knowledge of the questions of the day and view the struggle and expression of their own age as they have viewed that of previous epochs of history.

MISS MARY A. JORDAN: One of the influences of education at the present day is to estrange the student from himself, to make him dependent upon authority either in books or in facts. The laboratory habit has been so perfectly contracted as to be in many respects disastrous. It is the office of the teacher of English to reintroduce the student to

himself, to help him to find himself interesting and trustworthy. To this end the teacher of English must be preëminently a person of character. As far as his specific work goes, a teacher of Latin may have no character at all, provided he knows his forms and drills them in. The English work of a school is its spiritual thermometer. It is dangerous nonsense to suppose that this work can be done by the way and in odd minutes by teachers primarily interested in something else and often possessed of notions about English which have been obstacles to their own success instead of reasons for it.

MR. JAMES B. TAYLOR : I would very much like to know how much time is devoted in Thayer Academy to this elaborate and fascinating form of the study of literature. It seems very attractive, and is set before us in a delightful way. I would like to know more about the details.

MISS THOMPSON : Five hours a week for four years.

PROF. WENDELL : I don't think that I should agree that the daily theme is not legitimate university work. The daily theme, as it exists at Harvard college, started in one of my courses perhaps eight or nine years ago. It was suggested to my mind by talking with a friend who was connected with a Boston newspaper. He remarked the fact that whoever became a reporter, no matter how ignorant he began, learned by the very effort of reporting to express himself in a readable way, in a way that the public would like ; and, at the same time, that reporting enormously stimulated observations of life, precisely the thing which I found my pupils in Harvard College to lack. Those two things,—a sort of facility of the pen, which makes their writing agreeable, as distinguished from correct, and a feeling that they are living in a real world as distinguished from a world of books—were secured to reporters by the simple fact of daily reporting. Acting on this suggestion, I introduced in my elective course the practice of requiring from every student a daily theme, which consists of a single page of probably fifty to a hundred words stating, so far as possible, in the broadest sense, what that man has observed during the day. It may be something he has seen, it may be something he has thought about. The only requisites are that the subject shall be a matter of observation

during the day when it is written, that the expression of it shall not exceed a hundred words or so, and that the style shall be fluent and agreeable. Now the result of this work is rather surprising. I have at this moment in my class at Harvard College within one or two of 170 men, and they write these themes every day, and it happens this year to be my duty to read those every day and to make some sort of note on them. It is necessary, I think, when a teacher requires a class to do anything, to keep the run of the work; of course, I must do it rather hastily. It is a matter of two or three hours a day. On each theme I make a brief note on the subject of the theme, and a brief note of the impression it makes upon me at the time. Then the themes are filed alphabetically, and ultimately I go over this work with the writers. When a student has written, perhaps, three or four weeks, he comes to my office, where we discuss both the substance and the style of his themes. And the curious part of it is that I find the two or three hours a day isn't anything like the tedious work you might think it would be. In certain aspects it is no more tedious than the reading of Pepys' Diary. You get these fragments of real life, which, if the class follows the work honestly, constantly improve both in accuracy and range of observation, and in facility and compactness of expression. They don't take much of a student's time either. I suppose a man ought to be able to write at the rate of ten words a minnte, and there are not more than a hundred words in the theme; if a man can't do it in ten minutes, he can't do it properly. The amount of work is very small, and the amount of culture, in the broadest sense, is considerable. It is a source of training, for it brings the men into contact with the world; and its benefits seem to me to be so marked that I should feel very far from saying that it was not a good practice for a man even in the most advanced stages of learning. In fact, now and then, when I find that my sense of the fact that I am a living being in a living world is getting pretty languid in the recesses of Harvard College, I put myself through this process of daily writing. I leave a book on my table and write a page every day: and even after thirteen years of teaching, I find it by no means a useless experience. The practice is not useless, at any rate, to one whose business is chiefly teaching composition.

MR. HUBER GRAY BUEHLER, of the Hotchkiss School: Ever since the Hotchkiss school was organized, writing exercises have been a part of every recitation in English. They are very simple. The first ten minutes of every English recitation is spent in writing with pen and ink in a composition book a short theme, never more than one page, often not more than one-half a page, on a subject assigned by the teacher at the time. Usually that subject is taken from the course of supplementary reading, which is a required part of the English in the school. Occasionally the ten minute exercise is in the form of a business letter; sometimes it is about some school event, or individual experience; but the first ten minutes of every recitation is always a writing exercise with pen and ink. The results have been very gratifying, and there is no part of the English instruction which the school would be so sorry to part with as this. We find that the boys are interested in it; we find that it develops facility in writing; and it is the easiest thing in the world to conduct, provided the English teacher is able to work, as he is able to work at the Hotchkiss School, "with elbow room," as Professor Briggs would say. The foundation upon which all English teaching at the Hotchkiss School is built, is the liberal attitude of the faculty, and especially of the headmaster and his associate, towards English work. The English teacher has nothing to do but to teach English, and the time which he must put upon the correcting of the exercises is regarded as part of his regular teaching work, and reduces the number of his recitations. Not an English exercise is written in the school which is not reviewed by the teacher.

The exercises which I have just described are entirely independent of the formal compositions, which come at stated intervals. The time and subjects of formal compositions are announced on the bulletin board. Occasionally the subjects are selected by the students under advice. Our method of criticising composition exercises is simple, and saves a great deal of time. The school has had printed a "Composition Card" containing a system of marks with their meanings,—I don't know the exact number,—probably thirty. For instance, W means a wrong word or a wrong form; V means that the expression is vague; Pr means that a mistake has been made in the use of pronouns; another mark means "search for a mistake and correct it." By means of this system of marks it is possible for a teacher to go very rapidly

over the exercises, indicating the weaknesses, and leaving the pupil to correct them. The pupil must do the correcting ; and the first thing the instructor does, when the composition book again comes under his eye, is to turn back to the preceding exercise and see if it is corrected ; if it is not, "N" goes down, meaning "neglect;" if that is repeated "Te" goes down, meaning "come at once to the teacher and explain." We find in this method a way of holding the boys down to the work, and the results are encouraging.

MR. SAMUEL THURBER : My desire has been to have themes or subjects for writing that were as natural as possible, which pupils could certainly write about, about which there should be absolutely no lack of knowledge, something which is in their minds fully, fruitfully and completely, and which would need no research to enable them to write out a good composition. And it occurred to me that the simple reporting of class lessons might be such a thing ; and, having tried it, I found it to work so well that I am very strongly of the opinion that it must be continued, as furnishing the best kind of composition subjects. Every lesson is reported by at least one pupil, who listens particularly and takes a few notes and subsequently writes out an account of what was done, trying to make a good and complete record of all the numerous things said and done in the recitation, so far as they can be remembered and put down. This makes a theme of perhaps four or five hundred words ; rarely less and often much more. In the hands of a bright girl, that report becomes a very entertaining composition to listen to, and I esteem the collection of these reports, which accumulate gradually in the class room, as valuable, since they give a resumé of the history of the work done by the section in English during the year. I am not at all particular what the nature of the subject is, on general principles, provided it is a subject that the pupil has in a fully developed condition in her mind, and which is interesting for other people to hear, within the limits of good taste and general propriety. But I consider that the secretary's report makes the best possible theme ; there are so many little opportunities in a secretary's report for getting punctuation marks and quotation marks nicely managed. One has to repeat what people have said, and put it properly in quotation marks ; one has to say what was said by various writers, and

quote them properly in the various foreign languages. This requires care and painstaking, which is a useful discipline to the writer. In my search for composition subjects, I have found this to be a very fertile supply.

Things come up constantly in literature that may be developed more fully by research among the books in the libraries. Nothing is more provoking and more piquant than to have somebody find something difficult. For instance, as happened the other day, in the works of the English poets, there were numerous references to the English lark, the nightingale and the linnet, birds which our pupils had not seen : and a certain girl brings in a book with colored plates of the linnet, the lark and the nightingale, and gives accounts of their habits, which she obtains from other books, which are extremely interesting. With a good public library at one's elbow, one need never be at a loss for subjects of research. Let these researches be reported in writing ; it is the best kind of a composition theme. I do not know how I could, with nineteen recitations per week that I must prepare, and with nearly two hundred pupils, even talk about or imagine a daily theme ; I cannot get anywhere near it ; it would certainly be work for three. I do not know but the work that I do would be about the equivalent of that, considering how short the themes would be ; but I cannot see how it could possibly be managed. I would like to ask Mr. Buehler how many pupils he has.

MR. BUEHLER : We have seventy boys, and I have ten recitations a week.

MR. THURBER : I have two hundred girls, and nineteen recitations.

MR. BUEHLER : Before I take my seat I should like to make a public acknowledgement of the substantial help Mr. Thurber has given me. Although not a pupil of his, I have been a visitor to his recitations, and a reader of his papers on teaching English ; and from both these sources I have drawn much inspiration and help.

I desire also to say that reports of recitations, by members of the class, have proved as good for our boys as they have for Mr. Thurber's girls. We have tried them with very pleasant results.

I find the boys interested in them, and the pupils improve rapidly in discerning the important things of the recitation and expressing them.

MR. KNOX : I should like to ask Prof. Wendell, if I may, his opinion of the value of the daily theme, in the substance of the thought. I should like to know if there is any substantial value in the matter that is written out.

MR. WENDELL : It is, in my opinion, often of surprising value. Usually the matter is increasingly valuable. Throughout the year, of course, in addition to their daily themes, my pupils do ordinary rhetorical work once a fortnight, which is carefully corrected. The daily work is intended to stimulate regular habits of observation in writing. The daily themes that I have in hand at this moment are decidedly stiff, rather painfully correct sometimes, and often,—I should say generally—anecdotic in substance ; the men try to make points. A little later in the year that symptom disappears,—the symptom is positively disappearing already after only three weeks of work. I take daily themes into the class about once a week, and read specimens of them before the class, and discuss both their substance and their style.

To answer Mr. Knox's question more specifically, however, I may best cite an instance of the subject-matter of daily themes at Harvard College. Last year on the morning after Bishop Brooks died, there came in to me, from a class of about 150 men, between seventy and eighty themes concerning Bishop Brooks. It was far and away the most impressive tribute to his memory that I remember. It was so impressive that it seemed to me one that ought not to be wasted. I took into my class as many of these themes as I could read in half an hour and read them. The impression made in the class by those themes was such as I have never seen elsewhere in my experience as teacher ; when the reading was finished, nobody moved in his seat for about sixty seconds. That was the result of the training upon those boys by the time Bishop Brooks died. They had been taught to write daily for half a year or more ; and they were really stirred, by a thing that meant a great deal to them, to an expression for which noble is not too strong a term.

MR. GEORGE L. FOX : I do not like to take up too much of the time, but I wish to speak myself upon one or two points, if I may. I very cordially and heartily sympathize with the tribute which Mr. Buehler paid Mr. Thurber. As we should say Mr. Collar is the Nestor of teachers of Latin in secondary schools, so I should say of Mr. Thurber that in the teaching of English he holds the same position ; and yet I frankly express my opinion that I don't always agree with Mr. Thurber's ideas, and I must express dissent from his statement that a text-book in rhetoric has no proper place in the secondary schools. I think with some classes of scholars that may be true ; but, when you consider the material of many schools, and lack of previous training, I believe that a simple text-book in rhetoric is almost as essential in teaching English as a Latin grammar is to the study of Latin. But the trouble is in these matters that we all go to extremes in our statements. I believe the rhetorical work of schools can be very much overdone, and you can make compositions wooden and juiceless by too constant pruning. Now, I find in practical work that, when I suggest something in regard to a faulty sentence, the boy often doesn't understand what it means ; he doesn't know the terminology, and it must therefore be taught to him either orally or through a text-book. I therefore believe in a moderate use of the text-book. I believe also, with certain classes of pupils, when they first begin their work, it is necessary to put up sign-boards, so to speak, as is suggested by Prof. Clark in his rhetoric. Let the teacher put down on the margin of the composition, opposite the mistake, an exact reference to the article in the text-book which describes such errors. I suppose the boys in my school may be duller than the boys in some other schools ; but, in not a few instances, where I have had the attention of boys called to their mistakes, they couldn't understand them. I believe in putting down the number of the rule that refers to the mistake. And, may I speak also of one criticism which I have heard upon the work of the daily theme. I have heard it said that the use of the daily theme expressly tends to hasty and careless composition. I think that is a danger which we need to avoid.

MR. THURBER : I am very much obliged to Mr. Fox for giving us an opportunity to speak about rhetoric once more. Mr. Fox, it seems, would have a text-book of rhetoric somewhere in the

early part of the school course. It is well to consider, apropos of that, that the conference on English last December reports that its province is at the very end of the school course. The opinion of the conference seems to have been that the function of a text-book of rhetoric was properly to sum up finally in a technical way the principles that have been applied in previous years. I am happy to agree with the conclusions of the conference, provided the text-book of rhetoric shall be put very far towards the end of the school course, that it should be made very small indeed, and that, in fact, it might be forgotten altogether without any great damage. If the principles of rhetoric have been inculcated by the teachers who apply them rigidly and unfailingly and intelligently throughout the periods of instruction, that they should be finally summed up in a text-book at the end, seems to be a matter of small consequence.

MR. KNOX: Mr Thurber has referred to the reports of the Conference. I should be glad to hear upon a point that has not yet been very expressly spoken of,—the value of the study in school of the master-pieces of literature; whether the conference considered that the time now spent upon those is valuably spent. The distinction I wish to bring out is contained in the very practical question of what the colleges desire the secondary schools to do with reference to this list of books they give us; whether they are to be thoroughly studied from a literary stand-point, or whether out of them the student is merely to store in his mind some subject-matter to be put into words in an essay when he is called upon to do so at the examination. Is it desirable to go into the minute study—verbal and real—of the master-pieces of literature? Or is it enough to read certain books with a view to practicing composition upon their contents?

MR. THURBER: It would be a task of ransacking my memory now as to what the conference did, and as the reports are about to be published, perhaps it is not quite necessary that I should do so. Still, I am of opinion, as regards the teaching of literature that is especially beautiful, where the form counts for a great deal, that the best thing to do is to read it all, and read it again and again and again; and if it is very beautiful and pregnant with meaning, to commit it to memory and have it repeated. If it is very serious, somewhat religious, the girls will take to it with

remarkable zeal. Of course there must be more or less study of the technique of literary expression.

THE CHAIR: By way of supplement to President Eliot's address last evening, it might be interesting for the audience to know what the conference on the subject of English demanded.

PRESIDENT ELIOT: I have an impression that the only way to learn to write is by writing. We all of us learn to talk, and some of us learn to write; and those of us who learn to write, I think, agree that we learn by writing and in no other way. The Conference on English want daily practice in writing. We have had at Harvard some rather interesting experiences upon the value of the short and pithy theme written every day. I wish Mr. Wendell might have an opportunity to state what he thinks of the daily theme. He has had a large experience of its utility. I have no doubt that he thinks that the daily theme, as conducted at Harvard, is useful; but he may say that it belongs in the secondary school—possibly in the primary.

MR. WENDELL: Concerning the danger of carelessness in the use of the daily themes, I know and I concede the danger to be constant, and therefore, I actually read the themes handed to me day by day. Daily themes unwatched might easily become daily strengthening of vicious habits. I also admit that off-hand practice of this kind will not secure polish and technical correctness; therefore, I think that complete training in writing can not be attained by daily themes. In short, I regard the relation of the daily themes to finished compositions as closely analogous to the relation of sketches to finished paintings; and I think there are not a few, both in literature and in painting, who can make good sketches and can never finish them; the power of finishing has not been given them.

With these remarks the discussion came to an end, and an adjournment was taken. The meeting which thus closed was one of the largest and most helpful in the history of the Association. To this result the cordial welcome accorded by Yale University and the kind attentions given by members of the Yale Faculty contributed no small share.

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